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**Memories of the Future: How are the narratives of possible future(s)
constructed by urban planning systems in France and Scotland?**

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Abstract

This thesis is an examination of how futures thinking has been deployed by the respective planning authorities in the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow City Region. My intention was to examine the experience of ‘post-industrial’ places that had undergone decline and recognized the need to construct a way forward. Of particular interest is how futures thinking has been operationalized in these two distinct settings: what it comprises, how it is practised, the narrative framings used and in particular, how futures thinking is enacted in imperfect ways by performing some futures and not others. Recent urban scholarship has largely focused on global and world cities approaches, creating hierarchies which have influenced how cities have been represented (or not). The theoretical claims associated with these approaches are concerned with one particular very narrow view of the global economy, that ‘privilege the view from the top’; Lille, the capital of the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow do not feature in these imaginings of places which fail to acknowledge the experience of ‘ordinary cities’. Drawing on the work of Robinson, understanding cities as ‘ordinary’, as opposed to positioned within world city league tables, presents the opportunity for cities to imagine their own futures and unique city-ness. It is from the standpoint of ‘ordinary cities’ that I have situated this research, which considers the production of the future narratives of the NPC region and Glasgow City region.

Declaration Page

This thesis has been composed by the candidate Kathryn McGlone. This work is my own and has not been submitted for for any other degree or professional qualification.

Kathryn McGlone

31st August 2012.

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List of Abbreviations

ADULM	<i>Agence de développement et d'urbanisme de Lille Métropole</i> Office for the development and urbanism of Lille
ALC	<i>Acteurs locaux concernés</i> Local actors concerned
DATAR	<i>Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale</i> Delegation for land planning and regional action (1963).
DIACT	<i>Délégation interministérielle à l'aménagement et à la compétitivité des territoires</i> In 2005, DATAR was renamed DIACT: Inter-ministerial delegation for regional planning and territorial competitiveness
DATAR	<i>Délégation interministérielle à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'attractivité régionale</i> In 2009, DIACT renamed DATAR – Inter-ministerial delegation for regional planning and territorial attractiveness.
GaWC	Globalization and World Cities: A research network based at the Geography Department of Loughborough University
GCVSDPA	Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority
LOADT	<i>La Loi d'Orientation pour L'Aménagement et le Développement du Territoire</i> The law Directing Planning and Development of the Territory
LOADDT	<i>La Loi d'Orientation pour L'Aménagement et le Développement Durable du Territoire : Loi Voynet n° 99-533 du 25 juin 1999</i> The law Directing Planning and <i>Sustainable</i> Development of the Territory
NPC	Nord Pas de Calais
NPF	National Planning Framework (Scotland)
OREAM	<i>Organisation d'études d'aménagement des aires métropolitaines</i> Organization of planning studies of metropolitan areas

SAMI	St. Andrews University Management Institute
SEM	<i>Société d'Economie Mixte</i> Mixed economy society
SRADT	<i>Schéma Regional d'Aménagement et de Développement du Territoire</i> A regional Scheme for Planning and Development of the Territory/ Masterplan

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Memories of the Future: How are the narratives of possible future(s) constructed by urban planning systems in France and Scotland?

From the point of view of empirical science, we can know nothing whatsoever about the future. It does not exist, therefore, it cannot be studied. Yet, intuitively we know there is something wrong with this view. It is true that the future is not an object, nor can it be the subject of experimentation. But that does not mean that it does not exist. There are many things that are very important to people which cannot be studied, measured, or even detected from an empirical perspective.....The domain that futures questions are situated in is not the same as that occupied by empirical science, so the criteria of the latter do not apply to the study of futures (Slaughter, 1995, p.29).

1.0 Introduction

A BBC radio broadcast by the science-fiction writer HG Wells¹ in 1932, lamented the fact there was not a ‘single professor of foresight in the world’ to address the future consequences of new inventions for society. Eighty years have elapsed since this broadcast. So what (if anything) has changed? This study is an examination of how foresight² has been deployed by the respective planning authorities in the Nord Pas de Calais region³ and Glasgow metropolitan regions. My intention was to examine the experience of ‘post-industrial’ places that had undergone decline and recognized the need to construct a way forward. Of particular interest to this thesis is how future thinking has been operationalized in these two distinct settings: what it comprises, how it is practised, the narrative framings used and in particular, how future thinking is enacted in imperfect ways by performing some futures and not others.

Traditionally, planning has engaged with the temporal through *préactive*⁴ quantitative prediction oriented techniques such as forecasting, which extrapolates existing historical trends, resulting in ‘de facto narratives of the future’ (Goodstadt, former Structure Plan Manager. Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan Joint Committee, interview, 16th March 2009). These techniques have their limitations and present an

¹ HG Wells on the Future - BBC broadcasts from the father of science fiction 19th November 1932. How the motor car serves as a warning to us all
http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/hg_wells/12403.shtml
(accessed 10th December 2010)

² In the context of this thesis, I have used the terms *foresight* to represent future thinking in the UK and *prospective* in France. These concepts will be discussed in their respective cultural contexts.

³ Nord Pas de Calais – to be referred to forthwith as the NPC

⁴ *préactive* - think here of the insurance man who prepares for foreseeable change because he knows that compensation is more expensive than prevention (Godet, 2007, p.9, my translation, my emphasis).

incomplete picture of the future. Future thinking has a complex relationship with planning. Its mode of operation is largely qualitative and diverges from traditional interpretations of time. Futures thinking does not presume to say what *will* happen in the future - it aspires to understand what *might* happen, through the exploration of alternative futures. As such, its aims are at once modest and yet very useful: Drawing on insight, data and knowledge from the past, which is interpreted to compose an informed view of present day processes; futurists try to assemble a picture of the future based on provisional, as opposed to empirical knowledge of the future (Slaughter, 1995, p.32). This is an ongoing process, which is continually revised in light of new information.

Some recent brands of futures thinking concern themselves specifically with urban futures and with the task of imagining possible future(s) for cities that have undergone rapid and radical change, through economic restructuring. Such approaches have been deployed in the NPC region and Glasgow city region, where the collapse of heavy industry has raised serious questions concerning the future direction of the cities. This has precipitated an exploration of future narratives by local stakeholders within the framework of the respective planning systems. This evokes an important and recurring question in this thesis: whose vision is it? In other words, whose values are being represented and subsequently framed, or indeed excluded from view? De Jouvenal, a prominent French futurist summarised this dilemma as follows: ‘According to what criteria – based on both current and future values – are we going to set our scale of priorities? According to what are some rather than others going to make choices for all (1986, p.30)? This is the space occupied by future studies to be explored in this thesis.

My interest in the future stems from my professional background in architecture in France, where I have been fortunate to collaborate on *grand projects* that are inscribed in urban frameworks designed to facilitate the translation of vision into action. This interest led to an evening class in *prospective territorial*⁵ at the CNAM⁶ in Paris, to explore in what way(s) Futures is more than planning. Future thinking, as practiced in

⁵ territorial foresight

⁶ Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers

the Nord Pas de Calais Region, is a ‘socially embedded competence’⁷ rather than a “‘strategic tool’”, it is practice rather than pure analysis (Pina et al, 2006, p.951). In contrast, in the Glasgow City Region, where future thinking is a more recent activity, futures exercises are presently specific and contingent. The difference in perception and appropriation of future thinking between the two countries is an important line of enquiry that I have explored in this thesis, yet it is necessary to state here that ‘future studies’ in Scotland is struggling to be mainstreamed, due in part to the lack of understanding of what futures studies actually *is* and does and to the misappropriation by some of the now defunct determinist notion of ‘futurology’. Misconceptions of future studies as a ‘pseudo science’, range from academic and on the margins of core decision making on the one hand, to surreal ‘crystal ball’ or ‘Star Treky’ connotations, on the other. Thus, negating the possibility of futures being considered a legitimate field of inquiry and reinforcing a ‘fear of futures’ (Figure 1.1). In stark contrast, future thinking in France exists at a different echelon of power and influence. The French approach to future thinking, *la Prospective*, is anchored in a strong academic tradition, which began immediately post war in 1946, with the implementation of National planning under the auspices of General de Gaulle, for whom ‘the plan’ was an ‘ardent obligation’. By the 1950s France was emerging as an ‘incubator’ of the modern futurist movement, with *la Prospective* often touted as one of the first examples of futures thinking in practice (Bell, 2003, p. 20); it is represented at government level in the form of an inter-ministerial delegation DATAR⁸.

⁷ ‘The notion of foresight as a planned emergence invites us to view it as a socially embedded competence. For planned emergence to occur, organizations need to combine: (1) an overall strategic direction built by top management which must be permanently updated in terms of relevant information; (2) local information collected and processed by the “‘people on the spot’”, i.e. organizational members located where action takes place . This combination of freedom and direction facilitates organizational knowing, considered as an ongoing social accomplishment rather than as a static embedded capability’ (Pina et al, 2006, p951).

⁸ *Délégation interministérielle à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'attractivité régionale* - Interministerial delegation for regional planning and territorial attractiveness.



"How do you want it—the crystal mumbo-jumbo or statistical probability?"

Figure 1.1 Misconceptions of future studies as a ‘pseudo science’

Source: www.CartoonStock.com, Harris, S, Catalog Reference: shr1126

Prospective is derived from the Latin verb *prospice*, (to look forward or into the distance), brought into current use by the French philosopher Gaston Berger in 1957. For de Jouvenal, a prominent French Prospective, the aims of prospective could be surmised as follows,

As a scientific subject aiming at certainty, prospective research can only deceive. But as a subject for action, with a variety of possible futures, this seems to me like freedom. And since prospective will never be able to reassure me that the future is known and certain, I will draw benefit through being able to act in a way which will steer the possible in the direction of the desirable (de Jouvenal, 1986, p.128).

While planning in France has been described as ‘an urban science’ (Paquot, 2002, p.12), la prospective does *not* aspire to be a ‘science of the future’ (Berger, 1960). The term la prospective was adopted in France in place of the term ‘futurology’, and first proposed by the German Professor Ossip K. Flechtheim in the mid 1940s to refer to a ‘science’ or a “prescientific” branch of knowledge’ (Flechtheim, 1972). De Jouvenal, dismissed the use of the term ‘futurology’, which he considered dangerous. He did so because it created the assumption that the future was part of a ‘new science’, which

exists at a higher level than human evolution and in which the inherent logic can be an object of scientific logic (1986, p.126).

A futurist is someone who aspires to understand the unknown future. They believe that the future can be shaped by human agency; they have learned to study the future and have understood how this 'knowledge' may be articulated to enable others to identify options and make choices in the present. They do so, by asking 'what if', 'what then' and 'how / why' questions (Slaughter, 2004, p.37). 'What if' operates on the margins of expertise, it evokes uncertainty, which is contrary to traditional scientific approaches to research, where uncertainty is considered an embarrassment (Ravetz, 1997, p.537). It is in part the many claims by future studies, as well as its increasing presence in various aspects of urban planning and city visioning that prompted my research. In the current economic climate, in particular, where uncertainty has amplified fear of the future and lead to the propagation in the press (both French and British) of adverts by clairvoyants who promise to deliver accurate readings of the future. At a cursory glance, two observations may be drawn from this trend: firstly, the innate human desire to understand what tomorrow holds and to be prepared for it and secondly, the need to approach futures questions in a more rigorous manner and clearly dissociate futures thinking from any connotations of 'magic'. My intention is to explore how futures studies operates and particularly how it can contribute to the field of urban planning of which the very essence is the future.

1.1 Past Imperfect, Future Possible(s)?

'Futurists and qualitative researchers' claim that the world is in a phase of transition, between something old, which is coming apart at the seams, and a new emerging paradigm (Slaughter, 1995, Ache, 2000, Berry, 1978, Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, de Jouvenal, 1986, Goux Baudiment, 2008, Ratcliffe, 2002, Slaughter, 1995). The something old is the industrial system, the something new, which is struggling to emerge, is marked by a renewed culture and worldview which has not yet been named (Slaughter, 1995, p. xv). The realisation that the future is uncertain disrupts the notion of tomorrow as a continuum of the present, which prevailed until the 1970s. During this time the dominant methodology of economic forecasting and trend analysis sufficed to construct an image of the future. The economic instability and social turbulence of the 1980s significantly disrupted these trends and brought that

assumption into question. This period of transition is defined by the urgency associated with the acceleration of the pace of change and complexity of societal and technological developments. This compels city regions, which occupy a critical nodal position in urban systems, to consider the time dimension of urban policy in the long term (Ache, 2000, p.439).

Although future thinking occupies a central role in urban thinking, it is not a recent preoccupation. It can be traced back to the early pastoral societies that were embedded in the cyclical movement of the seasons (Laszlo, 1988, p. 485). As a modern episteme, futures thinking has been greatly shaped by the disruptions produced both by the industrial revolution – late nineteenth century and early twentieth century utopianisms – and the destruction wrought by two world wars – the emergence of the American future oriented think tanks, closely associated with what President Eisenhower called the ‘military-industrial’ complex (Van Steenberg, 2005, p.365). The dropping of the first nuclear bombs by the USA on Nagasaki and Hiroshima in 1945 led to the realization that the making of the future was now problematic; there was no longer *one* future to be considered, rather a number of possible futures, some of which were not particularly pleasant (Slaughter, 2004, p.34). Initially futures interest was driven by either literary or strategic concerns. The first of these focused on utopianism and ‘things to come’, the latter focused on mass warfare and was later applied in the field of strategic management and marketing (Ibid).

Finally, to place this comparative urban futures study in context, it is necessary to relate it to other literatures on comparative urbanism with which it is in conversation. Recent urban scholarship has largely focused on global and world cities approaches (cf. Abu-Lughod, 1999, Amin and Thrift, 2002, Brenner and Keil, 2005, Friedman, 1995, GaWC 1999, Sassens, 1991, 2002, 2008, Taylor, 2004), creating hierarchies which have influenced how cities have been represented (or not). The theoretical claims associated with these approaches are concerned with one particular very narrow view of the global economy, that ‘privilege the view from the top’, Lille, the capital of the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow City region do not feature in these imaginings of places which fail to acknowledge the experience of ‘ordinary cities’ (cf. Amin and Graham, 1997). While these narrow constructions of urban hierarchies dominate urban literature, inhibiting the scope of imaginings of possible

urban futures, there remains a dearth of alternative trajectories for both urban policy and theory (Bell and Jayne, 2006, p.246). Drawing on the work of Robinson, understanding cities as ‘ordinary’, as opposed to positioned within world city league tables, presents the opportunity to reframe policy and the political challenges of imagining city futures within a more cosmopolitan field of research and policy (Robinson, 2006, p.166). It is from the standpoint of ‘ordinary cities’ that I have situated this research, which considers the production of the future narratives of the NPC region and Glasgow City region.

1.2 The experiences of Lille and Glasgow as Ordinary Cities In a World of Cities

The aim to be a ‘global city’ in the formulaic sense may be the ruin of most cities. Policy-makers need to be offered alternative ways of imagining cities, their differences and their possible futures – neither seeking a global status nor simply reducing the problem of improving city life to the promotion of ‘development’. ...Ordinary cities, on the other hand (and that means all cities), are understood to be diverse, creative, modern and distinctive, with the possibility to imagine (within the not inconsiderable constraints of contestations and uneven power relations) their own futures and distinctive forms of city-ness (Robinson, 2002, p. 545- 546).

The terms *global* or *world* city are frequently used to refer to global centres of ‘command and control’ (cf. Sassen) that are connected in trans-nationally networked hierarchies of economic, demographic and socio-cultural relationships’ (Brenner and Keil, 2006 p.5). It was King (1990, p.82) who proposed that ‘all cities are world cities’, yet poorer cities are not recognised by world city theorists - they are taken ‘off the map’ of urban research – and relegated to the position of ‘irrelevant cities’ (Robinson 2002, p. 539), or ‘unexceptional’ cities (Amin and Graham, 1997, p.417). Other imaginings of the global exist. Reflecting on a politics of scale, a study of Birmingham by Henry et al (2002) proposed a different understanding of the global - globalization from below- a bottom-up notion of globalisation that draws on the city’s residents and their histories, that are traditionally excluded from historical and contemporary constructions of the city (2002, p.118).

League table rankings are of interest to cities that are rated highly by them, however cities such as Glasgow and Lille⁹ do not fare well in these constructions of places, which focus on a small number of cities, positioning them relative to a narrow range

⁹ Lille & Glasgow are capitals of their respective regions, the NPC region and Glasgow City region

of other cities, thus the named cities acquire a visibility and ‘comparative power’ over others that are not (Ward, 2008, p.7). This is most visible in studies of world cities, where Glasgow and Lille do not usually feature at all. However a study conducted by Beaverstock et al (1999) of the GaWC¹⁰, claimed that while there is a general consensus that London and New York feature at the top of such rankings, there is much debate as to which other cities qualify for world or international status (Beaverstock et al, 1999, p.446). Drawing on Sassen’s argument that world city formation is characterised by advanced producer services, the GaWC study composed a roster of ‘world-cityness’, established through the study of four key services: accounting, advertising, banking and law. This roster includes a ‘grey zone’, where it is unclear whether the cities identified are world cities, or what the GaWC refer to as ‘some “sub-level” of city’. Instead of replacing the grey zone by a boundary, the “fuzzy” lower “frontier” to their list of cities is maintained by recording the global presence in cities below their chosen world city threshold (Beaverstock et al, 1999, p.451). Glasgow and Lille fall below this threshold - cited as having ‘minor centre status’ within category D (Evidence of World City Formation), below Alpha, Beta and Gamma cities, a position which merely serves to reinforce the gulf with ‘world cities’ at the apex of this roster which is more designed for policy elites and city managers, rather than for urban scholarship (Figure 1.2).

The GaWC studies are an example of the theoretical and methodological limitations of urban comparatives which this thesis hopes to transcend, yet their conception of cities is helpful in some respects. Taylor (2003), who leads the GaWC group, observed that imaginings of cities as enclosed entities within national territories prevailed until the late twentieth century in urban scholarship (cited in Brenner and Keil, 2006, p.6). Whereas today, cities are understood as existing in a ‘world of flows, linkages, connections and relations’ (Beaverstock et al, 2000, p.123).

¹⁰ GaWC: Globalization and World Cities – a research network based at the Geography Department of Loughborough University. <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/>

Figure 1.2: The GaWC inventory of world cities

Source: Beaverstock et al (1999), p.456

Cities are ordered in terms of world city-ness with values ranging from 1- 12.

A. ALPHA WORLD CITIES

12: London, Paris, New York, Tokyo

10: Chicago, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Milan, Singapore

B. BETA WORLD CITIES

9: San Francisco, Sydney, Toronto, Zurich

8: Brussels, Madrid, Mexico City, Sao Paulo

7: Moscow, Seoul

C. GAMMA WORLD CITIES

6: Amsterdam, Boston, Caracas, Dallas, Dusseldorf, Geneva, Houston, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Melbourne, Osaka, Prague, Santiago, Taipei, Washington

5: Bangkok, Beijing, Montreal, Rome, Stockholm, Warsaw

4: Atlanta, Barcelona, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Budapest, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Miami, Minneapolis, Munich, Shanghai

D. EVIDENCE OF WORLD CITY FORMATION

Di Relatively strong evidence

3: Athens, Auckland, Dublin, Helsinki, Luxembourg, Lyon, Mumbai, New Delhi, Philadelphia, Rio de Janeiro, Tel Aviv, Vienna

Dii Some evidence

2: Abu Dhabi, Almaty, Birmingham, Bogota, Bratislava, Brisbane, Bucharest, Cairo, Cleveland, Cologne, Detroit, Dubai, Ho Chi Minh City, Kiev, Lima, Lisbon, Manchester, Montevideo, Oslo, Rotterdam, Riyadh, Seattle, Stuttgart, The Hague, Vancouver

Diii Minimal evidence

1: Adelaide, Antwerp, Arhus, Baltimore, Bangalore, Bologna, Brazilia, Calgary, Cape Town, Colombo, Columbus, Dresden, Edinburgh, Genoa, *Glasgow*, Gothenburg, Guangzhou, Hanoi, Kansas City, Leeds, *Lille*, Marseille, Richmond, St Petersburg, Tashkent, Tehran, Tijuana, Turin, Utrecht, Wellington

Definitions

World city-ness values produced by scoring 3 for prime centre status, 2 for major centre status, and 1 for minor centre status.

An early paper by the GaWC (2000) claimed that world city data is largely derived from measurement of city attributes which permits individual case studies or comparatives, yet provides little information about relations between cities. In other words, the new metageography focuses on the nodes and not the links between them (Beaverstock et al, 2000, p.124). Initially, GaWC research was centred on the production and development of inter-city data, where cities are the objects of study, firms the subjects. Such research draws on data concerning the global strategy of office networks of producer service firms, which does not directly measure the 'flows between cities' but does indicate the cities in which firms choose to locate offices, thus the GaWC argue that aggregating numerous strategies across services will provide data on inter-city relations (Taylor et al, 2002). Richard Smith, an urban Geographer, previously part of the GaWC team, proposed an alternative understanding of world cities. Rather than conceiving of these cities as part of a vertical hierarchy as per the GaWC roster, he proposed they be understood as part of a horizontal network of places, actors and 'actants'.

The capacity of a global or world city to 'command and control' is governed by its participation as a 'switcher' in networks because power is only exercised through any actants' ability to enrol and mobilise others to perform in 'their' network. Consequently a successful network is an arrangement that enrolls actants to produce apparently stable patterns of purpose and action (Smith, 2003, p.576).

Although the GaWC group claim to be dedicated to 'the study of inter-city relations under conditions of contemporary globalization' (Taylor et al, 2002); their think tank posturing ignores ethnographic research of the poor and excluded (Abu-Lughod, 2007, p.400). Futures studies engages with wider questions. It is concerned not only with the 'image problem' of post industrial places, but also with the qualitative aspect of cities as 'places to live'.

In what way(s) can futures studies contribute to comparative urban research? Firstly, although futurists and qualitative researchers claim that the world is in a phase of transition; it is not known how long this period of transition will last, although it is marked by,

a coexistence of two paradigms, a dominant one, which has imposed itself on all human activities, and an emerging one, which points here and there, with highs and lows, but ever more frequently..... no one knows what will actually happen' (Goux Baudiment, 1997, p.867, my translation).

Futurists look for the pieces of the emerging new paradigm. They assemble them and try to make a whole. This thesis is an examination of how the respective planning authorities in the NPC and Glasgow city regions have not only engaged with the new paradigm, but shaped their respective futures, moving from a narrative of decline towards new future(s).

Secondly, the emerging paradigm is defined by the *velocity* of change (Ache, 2000, p.439, original emphasis), which compels city regions¹¹ to consider the temporal dimension of urban policy. This is a pertinent issue in Scotland where evidence based policy design is the norm, yet there is *no* evidence to justify the polity of a future that is yet to happen and therefore cannot be observed. It may be possible to summarise the fundamental difference between the futurists and policy scientists in terms of how they think about the future as being: that where futurists aspire to open up and explore the uncertainty of an unknown future horizon, policy scientists aspire to ‘de-futurise’ the future by removing uncertainty and providing security (Bell, 2003, p. 56). While in Scotland the relatively recent arrival of futures thinking has highlighted a tension between how futurists and policy scientists think about the future, this thesis takes seriously the premise that futures thinking is a means for looking at cities.

Thirdly, in an urban context, the construction of a futures narrative implies that there is no longer *one* future story to be considered. Rather a number of possible futures which must be explored, culminating in the choice of a desirable future. For the futures advocate this reorientation of the episteme (cf. Foucault) is central to creative planning, although such a deeply reflexive, and potentially conflictual process remains largely ignored in everyday planning. Opening out the questions of what can be or could be (the possible), what is likely to be (the probable) and what ought to be (the preferable) is risky, costly and time consuming (Bell, 2003, p.73).

In the twentieth century, planning strategies simply accepted the dominant world view as an ontological given. No attempt was made to examine how things might be if other alternative choices had been pursued and what alternative ‘realities’ these choices may have created (Inayatullah, 1990, p.116). A particular way of seeing, a

¹¹ City Region: Both case study future narratives are anchored in city regions. There is a substantial literature that surrounds this subject, beginning with Patrick Geddes,

rational, modern technocratic viewpoint, or what Lefebvre (1991) called the 'planners eye view' prevailed (Hubbard, 2006, p.77). Futures practitioners aspire to suspend all assumptions about reality, so that participants will question what they believe (and thereby dislodge the belief that 'we know we know'). Future studies may offer the field of planning a 'different perspective' and a more diversified view to cope with the uncertainty of this age and the challenges of accounting for the 'multiplicity of possible futures' (Puglisi, 2000, p. 5).

Fourthly, weaving stories of future possibles is inherently creative and yet utopian thought is frequently criticised on the grounds that its creative content is infused with impossibility, relegating it to the world of fantasy or wishful thinking, thus reducing the possibility of imagining alternative futures. The belief in *eutopia* has been further compromised by the proliferation of dystopian stories such as *1984* and *Brave New World* coupled with historical events: the Holocaust and the disruption of two world wars (Baeten, 2002, p.146). Futures thinking is located between these two opposing poles: *eutopia* and *dystopia*. This is the space occupied by future studies to be explored in this thesis.

Finally, is it possible that previous attempts at urban regeneration in post-industrial places were ineffective because they focused on cosmetic short term concerns such as image and ignored the wider issues discussed in the cases presented in Lille and Glasgow in Chapter 4? In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro, precipitated the adoption of more sustainable approaches, notably those espoused by LA21 (Local Agenda 21) which aspire to urban sustainability. They transcend the influence of environmental determinism, still prevalent in the architectural and urban design fields, which supports the idea that '...places that look good, make people feel good and perhaps even be good' (Gibson, Cameron, 2001, p. 20). They are concerned with well-being in the long term; which is intrinsically intertwined with Futures thinking.

1.3 Thesis Structure

The exploration of how the narratives of possible future(s) are constructed by urban planning systems in France and Scotland is explored in five chapters.

Chapter 2, “A Critical Evaluation of Literatures on Future Thinking and the City” is concerned with existing research which examines the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that support the exploration of futures thinking through the examination of three bodies of scholarship:

Firstly, by introducing the challenge that confronts urban planners in both the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow Metropolitan Region – de-industrialization. The second section considers how planners deal with this problem; I do so in two ways. Firstly, I provide a critique of the subset of literature on selling places, and look at the rise of the process of visioning and city marketing/branding. Then I consider then the notion of a regional discourse as a performative discourse (cf. Bourdieu, 1980). In the third section, I examine futures studies as an alternative; I do so in three ways: Firstly, I examine planning as building futures, in particular the notion of heterotopia as an alternative space for future thinking in the city. Secondly, I consider the contribution of utopian thinking to urban thought, why it has diminished in use and why it is necessary to rehabilitate it. Finally, I examine future thought as an alternative way or looking at planning and provide a working definition of *la prospective* and future studies.

Chapter 3, “Methodology” is a description and justification of the methodological framework, (that of a comparative urban research which considers the role of futures studies in planning in two distinct places). It deliberately takes a narrative enquiry approach to reflect not only the ‘stories’ that were told during the interview process, but also the respective narratives of decline and future narratives. It concludes with an examination of the limitations of this approach.

Chapter 4, Narratives of possible urban futures”, is divided into three interrelated parts and opens by examining the context of the emergence of future thinking in the Nord Pas de Calais and Glasgow Metropolitan Region. My intention is to examine the experience of ‘post-industrial’ places that had undergone decline and recognized the need to construct a way forward through the creation of narratives of possible futures. The practice of future thinking in these distinct settings is subsequently divided into the second and third sections. In the second section, ‘Lost in translation’, I examine the futures thinking experiences of the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow City Region. This raises several questions, which the third section aims to explore: The Migration of Ideas, the ways in which futures thinking has to adapt as soon as it leaves the intellectual space of a futures exercise and migrates to the messy realities of the policy and state strategies. I do so by focusing on how future thinking becomes diluted by the various realities of politics, finance, context and policy tourism, neoliberalism and the migration of policy. This chapter concludes by briefly surmising the findings in the two case study projects.

Chapter 5

In this second and more succinct findings chapter, I build on the findings of Chapter 4, to argue how the NPC region may be used as a case study example that the Glasgow City region could learn from. Chapter 4 focused on the trajectory of future thought in each site and the mechanics of how it is implemented; here I specifically wish to examine how the respective futures narratives are enacted in imperfect ways, by performing some futures and not others. I do so in two ways: firstly by developing the notion of performativity within the context of the futures narratives. Secondly, by considering the constituency of these narratives, who is being influenced, why and to what ends; to understand how these exercises produce stakeholders, decision-makers and publics, in ways that include the usual profiles and authoritative voices and marginalise (albeit unintentionally) ordinary people. The chapter concludes by surmising how the depth of experience in future thought in the NPC region, in particular, how it was performed by regional actors, can be helpful to the Glasgow city region futurists as an example to learn from.

Chapter 6, offers some conclusions and provides a synopsis of this thesis. “A Synthesis of International Comparative Findings”, looks at the practice of future

thinking through comparative urban research and provides insight into the *individualizing* comparison by explaining the distinctive features of the case studies which only become apparent when contrasted with the other case.

I will now consider existing scholarship with which this work is in conversation, notably the origins and operations of future thinking in cities, specifically deployed in a planning context in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

A Review of Literatures on Future Thinking and the City

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into three different but related sections concerned with the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that support the exploration of futures thinking. It aims to provide a critical evaluation of literatures on the origins and operations of futures thinking in cities with which this work is in conversation. The chapter begins by introducing the challenge that confronts urban planners in both the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow City Region – de-industrialization. It does so by considering the decline and dystopian visions of the city through a brief portrait of each place. The second section considers how planners deal with this problem; I do so in two ways. Firstly, by providing a critique of the subset of literature on selling places; which considers at the rise of the process of visioning and city marketing/branding as a means of reorientation for cities confronted with deindustrialisation. Then I consider then the concept of performativity and in the context of this thesis, specifically regional discourse as a ‘performative discourse’ (cf. Bourdieu, 1980). In the third section I introduce future studies as an alternative; I do so in three ways: Firstly by introducing planning as building futures. Secondly, by examining the role of utopian thinking and the city, notably why it fell from favour and why it is now enjoying a revival in urban literature. It also briefly reviews science fiction as an important contribution to future urban thought. The chapter concludes by considering futures studies as an alternative approach to imagining the urban.

2.1 Stories of De-Industrialization

Hall observed that industrial heritage and post industrial reorientation have created something of an ‘image problem’ for former industrial cities. This he attributes to the negative imagery associated with the deindustrialisation of places, described as those of ‘...dereliction, economic decay and unemployment’, which are not conducive to inward investment (1998, p.123). In its role as a symbolic cover for more wide ranging fears and anxieties, urban decline discursively precedes the deteriorating conditions and bleak future of the city (Beauregard, 2003, p.22). These are the

characteristics that defined the urban landscapes of the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow City Region in the later part of the twentieth century. Here, I will examine how these places have engaged with their respective narratives of decline or stories of de-industrialization, which precipitated the 'image problem', through the presentation of a brief portrait of each place.

The narrative of decline of the Nord Pas de Calais Region is not only well documented; it is embedded in French literature. Emile Zola's celebrated *Germinal* published in 1885; depicted the misery in the coal fields of northern France in the nineteenth century, which precipitated an uprising by the local miners. This negative imagery was compounded, by the comments of a journalist, during a cycle race from Paris to Roubaix (NPC), just after the First World War. The extensive damage to the urban fabric of the region, which borders on the former battlefields of the Somme, led him to comment that it resembled 'the hell of the north' (Paris and Stevens, 1999, p.235). Despite reconstruction, ninety years later, this imagery persists in the public consciousness in France (Ibid). In the twentieth century, the Nord Pas de Calais suffered the ravages of two World Wars followed by the collapse of heavy industry, coal mining, metal work and the demise of weaving. Industrial collapse brought with it an employment crisis for the communities constructed around these industries.

For Paris and Stevens, Lille cannot be dissociated from the global evolution of the Nord Pas de Calais. The mutation from an industrial paradigm to a service oriented paradigm in Lille has produced a change in the perception and representation of the territory, notably the radical changes which have taken place in the last twenty years - think here of the arrival of the TGV and EuroLille (Paris and Stevens, 1999, p. 235). This paradigm shift is of particular importance to the position of the Nord Pas de Calais in a rapidly changing Europe,

In a Europe of nearly 400 regions, the question of image, of visibility, of identification on specifics, of the Nord-pas-Calais at international level is not without importance (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional,, 2007, p.22, my translation).

The urban landscape is changing; many of the old industrial buildings have been renovated and converted for other purposes, notably as University buildings, embedded in the local community or as *Follies* - spaces used by artists and local communities for cultural events. Thus the Nord Pas de Calais, through the

implementation of strategic events and restructuring of its urban fabric in line with the restructuring of the economy, is striving to change the image of the city from a dystopian landscape, an image which has dogged the region for more than a century, to one of a cutting edge interesting place to live and work.

The city of Glasgow is familiar with the notion of 'image problem'. Once a sophisticated 18th century port, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Glasgow's population had surpassed that of Edinburgh, rising to become the second city of the British Empire. Glasgow was now the fourth largest city in Europe, after London, Paris and Berlin (Glasgow City Council, 2007). A period of prosperity, which lasted for more than a century, drew to a close in the first two decades of the twentieth century, as Glasgow's position as an important world industrial site collapsed, a catalyst for the exodus of a significant population in search of employment and a better quality of life elsewhere. Glasgow was one of the first cities in the world which ceased to grow, swiftly changing from a profile of population growth to stagnation and decline (Pacione, 1995, p.130). Pacione attributes this phenomenon to structural problems within the city and beyond to its relationship to the global economy. Glasgow suffered acutely during the world depression years because the economy of the city was focused on export (Ibid, p.132). This change was felt most acutely in the ship building industry which went into irreversible decline post World War II, when the rate of unemployment was twice the national average, which precipitated a population exodus. In the forty year period between 1961 and 2001, the city's population was almost halved, falling from 1, 055,017 to 578,710 (Glasgow City Council, 2007, p.17).

Thus the accumulation of rapid changes to the urban fabric of the city, combined with 20th century deindustrialization and the painful process of restructuring, led to darker images of crime, poverty and deprivation. The utopian dream of the post War planning interventions swiftly spiralled into a dystopian nightmare, particularly in the peripheral housing schemes in Glasgow, where the state had unwittingly become an agent of 'compassionate wounding' (Sennet, 2003, cited in Boyle et al 2008, p.315). According to Damer, representations of Glasgow across a broad spectrum of the British media, since 1968, illustrate a consistent negative stereotyping of a

Filthy, slum-ridden, poverty-stricken, gang-infested city whose population consisted of undersized, incomprehensible, drunken, foul-mouthed, sectarian lumpen proletarians who were prone to hit each other with broken bottles and razors without warning. To make matters worse, Glaswegians were infected with the Red peril; Glasgow was a robustly socialist city. Its people actually believed in all that stuff about the Red Clyde (Damer, 1990, p.5).

Such a well-documented, if distorted, narrative of decline did little to encourage inward investment in Glasgow. Yet it also served a purpose. It drew attention to the social distress of the city in the throes of de-industrialisation, which called for action. City marketing was introduced as a strategy to enhance the image of Glasgow, initiated through the Glasgow's Miles Better Campaign. It aimed to shed the 'no mean city' image to enable the city to start its economic and physical regeneration. Previously the negative imagery of Glasgow as synonymous with a dangerous and violent place; lowered the morale of its citizens and was not conducive to business or inward investment¹². This approach was supported by a series of events including: The Garden Festival of 1988, the European City of Culture in 1990 and City of Architecture in 1999. Finally, the Commonwealth Games will be hosted by the city of Glasgow in 2014. Having presented a brief portrait of the conditions of de-industrialization in each context, I will now discuss how planning systems deal with the question of de-industrialization.

2.2 From Deindustrialization to the Emergence of the Processes of City Marketing and Visioning as Tools of Future Reorientation

The impetus to construct new city narratives has been driven by the dynamics of city governance, which have shifted in an era defined by inter-city competition for investment or 'place wars' (cf. Haider, 1992). Compelled to look beyond the local, the urban politics of economic development has become 'globalised', a process which Cox refers to as the New Urban Politics (NUP) (1995, p.213). The central thrust of NUP is the power relations between capital and local communities (Cox, 1993, p.445). This was characterised by a shift from the provision of welfare services, to what Harvey (1989) calls more entrepreneurial styles of urban governance. In the specific case of Glasgow, this shift took place against the backdrop of Thatcher government policies, which championed the role of public-private partnerships (Hall

¹² Glasgow City Council (2012) Cultural renaissance: the 1980s and 1990s: Glasgow's Miles Better Campaign 1983 <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/AboutGlasgow/History/Cultural+Renaissance.htm> (Accessed the 21st August 2012)

and Hubbard, 1996, p.157). The reduced expenditure available to local government coupled with these policies, created a set of circumstances, where Glasgow and other declining cities, had no choice but to compete for private sector funding (Ibid, p.157). In the French context, public private partnerships have flourished since the introduction of decentralization in the 1980s. These exist in the form of SEMs (Société d'Economie Mixte), a limited company, in which part of the capital is held by the state or local government directly or indirectly and by private economic and financial partners¹³.

Historically, cities have always had to compete for investment, thus it may be argued that the turn to 'new' entrepreneurial forms of governance is the latest strategy to be deployed in a long line of political strategies (cf. Harvey, 1989, Hall and Hubbard, 1996, p.155). The necessity for post industrial landscapes to reinvent themselves has been compounded by globalization, which has intensified competition between places, forcing them to differentiate themselves from other places to attract investors. Paradoxically, in the process, places are becoming increasingly more alike and rendering competitive advantage ephemeral, as Harvey observed,

How many successful convention centres, sports stadia, Disney-worlds, harbour places and spectacular shopping malls can there be? Success is often short-lived or rendered moot by parallel or alter-native innovations arising elsewhere (1989, p.12)?

Place marketing permits differentiation from competitors, it encourages inward investment, by celebrating what it is that makes that place unique and why it is worth living or working there. Acceptance of promotion as a valid activity for public sector management, began only about twenty years ago, where marketing was used to implement specific goals, becoming an integral part of the study of places and their management, (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005, p.506). For Fretter, place marketing is a fundamental part of planning, a fundamental part of guiding the development of places in a desired fashion, which he claimed requires a demand oriented approach rather than a supply oriented approach of traditional planning. It is the proactive pursuit of the desirable, rather than the reactive prevention of the undesirable (Fretter, 1993, p.165).

¹³ Makowski, F - SEM (société d'économie mixte)
<http://www.marche-public.fr/Marches-publics/Definitions/Entrees/Seml.htm>
(Accessed, 10th March 2011)

City marketing in specifically British cities has largely focused on economic objectives with little attempt to integrate marketing objectives into the physical planning of the city (Paddison, 1993, p.340). Thus framed in economic terms, it overlooks the wider societal implications to which it gives rise (Ibid, p.341). According to Paddison, there are three further reasons why the marketing of cities is problematic. Firstly, the reconstruction of cities is an attenuated process which may exceed the fiscal capacity of the city concerned. Here marketing may be of use to raise private capital required to support development. Secondly, the question of scale, as the impact of marketing often lies beyond the city limits. This raises the question as to whether it is necessary to intervene at urban, or regional level, as is the case for old industrial regions, which frequently rely on a network of cities. Finally, city marketing raises ethical questions of political accountability and equity (Paddison, 1993, p.342).

The city of Glasgow has used place marketing as the central policy tool to attract investment. Here the district council has been faced with the quandary of 'acting in the interests of capital and those of the local community' (Boyle and Hughes, 1994, p.460). The 1990 city of Culture event was driven by marketing objectives, which attracted local opposition to the representation of Glasgow which ran counter to traditional understandings of local identity (Boyle and Hughes, 1992, p.454). This suggests that city marketing amounts to an exercise in meaning manufacture and transfer, which for Glasgow required that firstly, the city 'come to terms with its previous existence as an industrial city' (Paddison, 1993, p.348). A politics of urban entrepreneurialism which evoke an important and recurring question in this thesis, whose image of the city is to be represented? This is an ongoing criticism in Glasgow, which is focused on the image – reality gap. The image of the new Glasgow is far removed from the reality of the experience of social deprivation in the peripheral estates (Paddison, 1993, p.348). The Glasgow experience also points to gaps in the literature between images of place as projected by the 'marketeers' and the reality of place as understood by the locals.

In stark contrast, the city of Lille enjoyed a more positive experience as host of the City of Culture event in 2004. Building on the commercial success and spirit of Lille

2004 - Lille 3000 – was launched in its wake. While the primary purpose of this event is territorial marketing, it was also a platform to incite inward investment and encourage those inhabitants who lived there to remain there and create a sense of belonging among them. It is distinct from other marketing campaigns in its temporality, situated firmly in the next millennium - Lille 3000. In this sense it is not only concerned with the very long term future, it is specifically utopian in nature, which the city's mayor Martine Aubry¹⁴ described thus,

As a gateway to the future, lille3000 proposes to explore the richness and complexities of tomorrow's world by investigating its many paths of development. Neither festival nor biennale, lille3000 invites us to discover cultures through the most contemporary artists from near and afar, while sharing its events with the greatest possible number in the heart of the city.

Lille3000 investigates multiple fields: the economy and new technologies, the art of living in the city and the construction of the city of tomorrow, spirituality, and more generally questions of society and civilization.....

From Lille 2004 to Lille3000, the journey continues.

Historically, marketing techniques have sought to avoid a gap between image and reality, whereas in Lille it is deliberately so. For Thiard (2007, p.150), the technique of *nouvelle utopia* deployed in Lille 3000 is no more than a vision of a 'staged social cohesion', to encourage settlement and promote awareness of Lille with the hope of economic benefits. Paradoxically, the gap has become a selling point (Ibid, p.152-153).

Territorial marketing and territorial prospective are concerned with the construction of the future image and identity of a territory, although they do so in different ways. Thiard identified three principal differences: Firstly, the temporal aspect. Territorial prospective is situated in a rigorously analysed time frame and results in a territorial project, whereas territorial marketing is concerned with the ephemeral; simply a nod to the future. Secondly territorial prospective is a bottom up process, marketing is predominately top down. Finally, territorial prospective is constructed by working groups of local actors. It aims to change the behaviours of these actors and facilitate networking between them; and is largely in-house. Although marketing aspires to

¹⁴ Source: Lille 3000, 'Lille 3000 le Voyage Continue : Présentation'
<http://www.lille3000.eu/lille3000/fr/presentation.php>
(Accessed 15th July 2011)

create a local sense of place, it aims to encourage investment and tourism, from an audience that lies largely outside the territory (Thiard, 2007, p.151).

The field of city *branding* is a more recent activity which emerged from city marketing; Smidt-Jensen defined it as follows,

City branding is about the intangible qualities of a city, eg. The “values” of a city and the “feeling” or “mood” one experiences when visiting or residing in the city. Thus a city brand can be defined as the totality of thoughts, feelings, associations and expectations that come to mind when exposed to a city’s name, logo, products, services, events or any design or symbol representing a city. One might say that city branding is concerned with addressing the identity of a city and a deliberate attempt at turning a city’s identity, or selected parts of it, into an asset on the market - a brand (2005, p.160).

It is a struggle to represent a place, a power differential between the planners ‘the doctors of space’ as described by Lefebvre (1975) and the inhabitants of that place. Detractors of place branding cite the tendency of stakeholders to practice selective ‘story telling’ (Eckstein and Throgmorton, 2003). Thus creating the danger of presenting cities as ‘objects for consumers, rather than places to live’ (deBarbieux, 2006, p. 27). For Kearns and Philo, there is a subtle form of *socialisation* at work in the self promotion of places, which may be designed to convince local people, including the disadvantaged, that they are part of a successful community and ‘good things’ are being done on their behalf (1993, p.3). Yet places can and do have multiple meanings. An abandoned steel works or dockyard means something very different to a redundant worker than to a property developer or politician (Goodwin, 1993, p.149).

In this era of globalisation, new behaviours are emerging. A study conducted by Beritos and Gospodini on the transformations of urban landscape focused on the case study of Athens and the landscape transformation brought about by the Olympic games. While in the past, major urban design schemes and the avant-garde were largely a result of economic growth, in the current climate of globalisation, the reverse is true. Urban design is now actively deployed as a tool to encourage the economic development of cities in response to competition from other places (Beritos and Gospodini, 2004, p.188). In a framework of intercity competition, cities are promoted as “commodities”, in the new leading urban politics. Both built heritage and the innovative design of space, contribute not only to the ‘competitive edge’ of cities, but also provide a means for ‘branding’ the urban landscape (Ibid, p.189).

The notion of ‘competitive edge’ of cities continues through the creation of ‘best practice’, which involves considerable labour in the circulation of ideas, publications, media and conferences, where policy actors are able to network with global peers, an activity that McCann calls ‘policy boosterism’, the active promotion of policies or practices to enhance their reputation among and adoption by, a wider community of policy (2010, p.120). A popular current example is the Vancouver model, whose narrative has been promoted by the unremitting efforts of planners, politicians and consultants in educating their peers elsewhere about ‘Vancouverism’ (Ibid). However, the performative force of particular discourses such as Vancouverism and other best practice examples leads to a repetition of these same stories, which leads to an impoverishment of creativity, as Harvey observed,

Many of the innovations and investments designed to make particular cities more attractive as cultural and consumer centres have quickly been imitated elsewhere, thus rendering any competitive advantage within a system of cities ephemeral (1989, p.12).

Certain policies can be taken forward by interested parties. Consider for example the image of the entrepreneurial city, which is becoming more tightly disciplined through the repetition of certain architectural forms and institutional practices, to prevent it being compromised by the presence of groups marginalized by the hegemony of the neoliberal ideology (Macleod, 2002, p.254-255).

The translation of policy or ideas across contexts often fails to recognize the process of representation and institutionalization, as different from those at the point of origin, which Said claimed complicates any account of the translation, of theories and ideas (Said, 1983, p.226). Even the “same” policies have different effects in different places, due to their embeddedness in societal and structural environments (Peck and Theodore, 2010, p.173). According to McCann, the notion of policy transfer suggest the importation of fully formed off-the-shelf policies, when in reality, this process is much more complex. Policies, models and ideas, he claimed, are not moved around like gifts at a birthday party (McCann, 2010, p111). Rather, as Peck and Theodore argued, mobile policies move in bits and pieces – as selective discourses, and arrive not as replicas, but as policies already-in-transformation (2010, p.170).

For Harvey, the new urban entrepreneurialism rests on public-private partnerships which are centred on the speculative construction of place through economic development as opposed to the improvement of conditions within a given territory as its immediate political and economic goal (1989, p.8). The resulting convergence of the private sector, mainly composed of business and property interests with the public sector, has raised the control of polity by the new bourgeoisie (Ibid, p.155). Although “Public-private partnerships” have dominated the planning and implementation of redevelopment in British and American cities, Fainstein has warned that such partnerships can lead to the repression of subordinate groups (2001, p.204). A pertinent example is the vision produced by the city of Atlanta’s ‘imagineers’, which excludes aspects of the city and its population that do not sit well with ‘their’ vision of how it should be. By refusing to acknowledge them, or processes that bring them into being; boosters merely reinforce the disparity between populations in the city (Rutheiser, 1996, p.287-288).

In an era where the ‘space of places’ has been surpassed by the ‘space of flows’ (cf. Castells, 1996), city visions must juxtapose local concerns within the wider global political project of neoliberalism. Although Bourdieu and Wacquant (2001, p.2) referred to neoliberalism as the diffusion of a ‘new a planetary vulgate’, for Tickell and Peck, it is ‘neither monolithic in form nor universal in effect’ (2002, p.384). Neoliberalisation is a process in which the boundaries of the state and market are blurred and constantly renegotiated (Tickell and Peck, 2003)¹⁵. The slippages between Neoliberalisation and globalisation are indicative of different ways of seeing the world economy. According to Peck and Tickell, while neoliberal politicians cite globalisation as a powerful market force, to support deregulation, welfare cutbacks etc., opponents of free-market globalisation and critics of these policies, often perceive them as evidence of neoliberal hegemony (Ibid). The critics, they argued, adhere to the label ‘neoliberal’ as a means of emphasising the *political* nature of this behaviour (Ibid).

¹⁵ GaWC Research Bulletin 102 (2003) <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/rb/rb102.html>
This Research Bulletin has been published in Peck, J and Yeung, H (eds) (2003) *Remaking the Global Economy: Economic-Geographical Perspectives* London: Sage, pp. 163-181.

In the introduction to this thesis, I discussed the notion of global or world cities as envisioned in the GaWC literature; the centres of ‘command and control’ (cf. Sassen) for economic globalization. While Taylor, who leads the GaWC group, suggested the existence of a ‘world city network’, Smith contests this. Rather he argued that research by SSF (social studies of finance) scholars has brought into question both the *modus* and *locus operandi*, of the global city concept (and the interlocking world city network model) by considering the acts accomplished by financial services in global cities. Specifically, by considering the acts accomplished by these services to be *performed* (as events) as opposed to *preformed* (as functions). SSF research points towards the notion that power is decentralized and distributed across networks of humans, non humans and ideas, thus according to Smith, centres of international finance must be ‘reconceptualised as networks and assemblages, where power is always diffuse, always circulating, always mobile, always in-between, and always co-related’ (Smith, 2007b). Returning to Castell’s notion of a ‘space of flows’, what is of interest here is the question of scale and how this impacts on city governance. Scales are not fixed - which implies a ‘remaking’ of urban governance - an ongoing process of place-making and scaling (Brenner, 2009, p.32). This is a process brought about by the perpetual reworking of the geographies of capital circulation and accumulation; which throws out existing spatial configurations and scales of governance, creating new ones in its wake (Swyngedouw, 2000, p.68).

The new spatial configurations call into question the role of the state in the politics of the entrepreneurial city. For Swyngedouw, a reorganisation of government techniques in response to the reduction in forms of welfare-state intervention represents a shifting of the regulatory competence of the state onto ‘responsible’ and ‘rational’ individuals (1995, p.1997). While much of the literature on the entrepreneurial city simply assumes the intervention of other actors implies a reduced role for the state, a study of East Manchester by Ward demonstrates otherwise. Here the State is actively involved in structuring urban redevelopment in the area, although, how ‘it does’ redevelopment, has shifted since the 1990s, from a Keynesian to a neoliberal approach (2003, p.125). Contrary to Harvey’s assertion that urban entrepreneurialism implies some level of inter-urban competition (1989, p.10); Sadler suggested that places are not necessarily competitive. They appear to be so under a specific political

packaging of the concept of place, which calls for greater scrutiny of these understandings of place as a prelude to alternative policies (Ibid, p.191-192). Sadler's point illustrates the limitations of the utility of these literatures on place branding and marketing as a means for the reorientation for cities confronted with deindustrialisation, which are constrained by neoliberal logics focused on selling places as opposed to understanding places. Future thinking offers an alternative solution for planners, as I will demonstrate in the chapters that follow; it enables new imaginings of place. It is concerned not only with resolving the 'image problem' of post industrial places, rather the broader question concerned with the qualitative aspect of cities as 'places to live'.

2.2.1 Regional discourse as a performative discourse

The term 'performativity' was coined by the philosopher J.L. Austin (1962), to illustrate that language can be used not only to represent the world, but also to change it, by producing something new, through linguistic performance (Barnes, 2008, p.1434). In 'How to Do Things With Words', a book composed of a series of his lectures, Austin begins by making the clear distinction between a 'constative utterance', such as 'the cat is on the mat', from 'performative utterance'. Here the utterance indicates the performing of an action, it *does* something; it amounts to more than just reporting something (Austin, 1962, p.5-7). Austin later goes on to recognise that *all* utterances are performative and defined the act of 'saying something' the performance of a *locutionary* act (1962, p.94). He then distinguishes two further kinds of speech acts: the *illocutionary* and *perlocutionary* acts. In the first, the utterance indicates the performance of an action, it has a certain force in saying something, thus, 'I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*' has the effect of naming or christening the ship' (Austin, 1962, p.116). The illocutionary act is 'done as conforming to a convention' (Ibid, p.118). Whereas in the latter, the utterance will often produce 'certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience', done according to Austin, with the intention, or purpose of producing them (1962, p.101).

Drawing on Austin's work, the feminist philosopher Judith Butler's interpretation of performativity has largely focused on gender performativity and the politics of language. Performative force, she claimed, is not restricted to the 'moment' of

utterance itself, rather the ‘moment’ is ‘ritual and condensed historicity’; it exceeds itself in past and future directions (Butler, 1997, p.3). A performative which she deemed ‘provisionally’ successful, in the sense that it echoes prior actions, and *‘accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior and authoritative set of practices’* (Butler, 1997, p.51, original emphasis). Thus, the speech act, not only takes place *within* a practice, but the act is itself a ritualized practice (Ibid). Butler’s interpretation of the performative extends beyond Austin’s simplistic understanding of ‘performative force’ depending on established convention, for her, a performative ‘works’ as far as it ‘draws on and covers over the constitutive conventions by which it is mobilised (Ibid).

Of particular interest to this thesis is the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s claim that a regionalist discourse is a ‘performative discourse’ (1980, p.66). The effectiveness of this discourse is rooted in Bourdieu’s notion of ‘social magic’, which proposes to produce ‘the existence of the thing named’, and is proportional to the authority of the speaker (1980, p.66). Again, Bourdieu’s understanding of the force of performative discourse differs from Austin’s simpler reliance on ‘felicitous’ (successful) or ‘infelicitous’ utterances, where ‘the felicitous’ must be uttered by an appropriate person in accordance with established conventions. As Butler pointed out, although Bourdieu is right that not all performatives ‘work’ and that not all speakers are authorized to participate in the creation of the ‘social magic’ which produces these discourses, he fails to acknowledge that social positions are themselves constructed through ‘a more tacit operation of performativity’ (Butler, 1997, p.156). This ‘tacit and performative operation of authorization’, she argued, does not always stem from ‘official discourse’, more from various and diffuse sources, as is the case in racialisation or social abjection. Thus, she argued that linguistic practices mirror the social orders conceived outside of the discourse concerned (Butler, 2007, p.157). Bourdieu’s understanding of speech acts presumed that the performative will ‘work’ or not, depending on the authority of the speaker. His understanding of social institutions as static, does not allow for the logic of iterability that Butler claimed governs the possibility of social transformation (Butler, 1997, p.147).

2.3 Planning as Building Futures

Although territorial Prospective and Planning share the common objective of shaping urban futures, there are fundamental differences in their approaches. Planners traditionally rely on forecasts, which many futurists reject as offering an overly confident view of the future, by focusing on what *will* be rather than what *could* be, leading to doomed plans (Cole, 2001, p.373). Furthermore, planners are often constrained by their institutional remit, not wanting to appear ‘off the wall’ to policy makers, whereas futurists advocate creativity, normative visions and ‘thinking outside of the box’ (Ibid). Territorial foresight is *not* a panacea for the ills of society, yet it is my contention that it offers new insights into traditional planning approaches. It enables planners to engage with and anticipate the development of existing *and* emerging urban trends. Through an investigation of the future possibilities, it facilitates a deeper understanding of the implications of planning decisions for the future of cities, specifically; it engages the qualitative aspect of cities as ‘places to live’.

According to Throgmorton, cities and their planning-related institutions can be thought of as nodes in a *global-scale* web constructed of a fluid and constantly changing set of relationships. Thus, he claimed, plans could be thought of as *persuasive stories* about how the relationship between the particular nodes will change in the future (2003, p.13). For Cole, planning is the vehicle through which futures studies is manifest in physical and social reality and permits future studies to be rooted in real problems as opposed to drifting into fantasy. ‘The primary aim of a futures study is to tell a convincing story about the future’ (2001, p.375). Accepting the multiple publics involved in this process,

then futurists’ responsibility is to help people to articulate their beautiful dreams, and planners’ responsibility is to help make those dreams come true (Cole, 2001, p.373).

Powerful actors may try to suppress competing stories, or persuade some planners to construct futures stories designed for a restricted range of potential publics (Throgmorton, 2003, p.146). Here, the role of the planner is to create a space for these stories and counter-stories to be told *and* listened to. So what form might this take?

Is it possible that the rekindling of utopian thought could guide planners and policy makers in their quest for alternative visions of the future, or is a different approach called for? In chapter one of this thesis, I stated that future thought inhabits the space

located between *eutopia*, a good place and *dystopia*, the other extreme. This in-between space where future thought is developed resembles Foucault's notion of *heterotopias*. In the introduction to 'The Order of Things' Foucault (1974, p.xix) described the road to utopias as 'chimerical', they permit the construction of discourse in an untroubled region in which they are able to unfold. In contrast *Heterotopias*, derived from the Greek *heteros*, 'another' and *topos*, 'place' are real spaces that challenge the space in which we live, they destroy 'syntax', they 'contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths' (Foucault, 1974, p.xix). Foucault's *Heterotopias* permit a questioning of power dynamics, where 'power's condition of possibility' does not have a central focus, it is 'local, unbalanced, tense, heterogeneous and unstable (Johnson, 2006, p.86). If as Perry (2003, p. 151) suggests planning 'infers not fixedness but openness', this implies that approaches to planning must reflect this and not be conditioned by the partial representations of the political economy. Are heterotopias the new order of things, a paradigm shift (cf. Kuhn) that would permit the critical questioning of the future possibles? As 'counter sites' heterotopias open up dialogue on difference and contestation, subjects which traditional utopias fail to address. For Hetherington, *Heterotopias* are 'spaces of alternate ordering' that organise the social world in a way that is different to that which surrounds them. 'That alternative ordering marks them out as Other and allows them to be seen as an example of an alternative way of doing things' (1997, p.viii). Territorial foresight is one such alternative ways of doing things, it enables planners to engage with and anticipate the plethora of question generated by the challenge of practicing planning. It calls for the construction of the 'counter sites' or *Heterotopias*.

2.3.1 Utopian Geographies: The role of utopian thinking in the city

A map of the world which does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the country at which Humanity is always landing (Oscar Wilde, 1891).

To place this study in context, it is important to understand the significance of utopian geographies within future thinking, which is here considered by tracing its origins through the history of prominent utopian thinkers and movements. Of particular interest to this thesis is the decline of utopian thinking in urban scholarship and subsequent revival by a select few scholars (cf. Harvey 2000, Levitas 1990, Marin 1984, Pinder 2002, 2005, Sandercock 2003). I aim to explore the reasons behind this phenomenon and why it is necessary to 'rehabilitate' (cf. Lefebvre, 1991) utopia. It is

my contention that utopian thinking is central to the creative process, which in turn plays an important role in the construction of alternative city futures.

The word Utopia is synonymous with Sir Thomas More's celebrated work of 1516, which depicts life on a distant island of the same name. The creation of utopian space by More has symbolic resonance; at once a no place *ou-topia* and a good place *eu-topia* (Baeten, 2002, p. x); effectively creating a referent for the 'other' of any place (Marin, 1993, p. 411). Utopian spaces are not a model; rather they are reflexive, as was More's intention. They do not aim to disrupt the existing order, they challenge it, they 'delete a conflictual situation, by imagination, by the dream' (Servier, 1967, p.316). It is now the power of these dreams which I wish to examine.

Imagining the future differently suggests a desire for something other than a continuation of the 'what is'. Through the identification of what is lacking in the present, 'wishful thinking' occupies an important role in the construction of possible futures, as a 'necessary step on the way to change' (Levitas, 1990, p.88). Bloch observed that pure wishful thinking has discredited utopias for centuries (1986, p.145). In his monumental work 'The Principle of Hope' he championed utopian thinking, arguing that it was not mere fantasy, but a 'Real-Possible', which by his reckoning could be achieved by political (Marxist) means. Central to Bloch's argument is the concept of the 'Not – Yet', which is twofold. The 'Not-Yet-Conscious', which distinguishes fantasy (or hope), lost in the 'empty possible', from the utopian function of 'Not-Yet-Being', which anticipates a 'Real-Possible'. The existence of a 'Real-Possible' suggests that not all possible futures will come to be, such as those he dismissed as fantasy or 'abstract utopia', which lack solid subject and are not related to the Real-Possible. 'Concrete utopia' anticipates a 'Real-Possible'. It is a new space, a process that is constantly in a state of becoming, a source of multiple possible futures (Bloch, 1986, p.237). Real future as found in waking dreams he argued, will be expressed in the Not-Yet-Become, in expectation, in ideas and thoughts (1984, p.113). Bloch's daydream is both escapism and resistance, his daydreamer a Marxist 'revolutionary'. Thus, utopianism as he conceived it; has the potential to be an agent for social change (Munro, 2006, p.64).

Utopian socialist schemes of the 19th century, as proposed by Charles Fournier, William Morris, Robert Owen and Henri de Saint-Simon drew on the work of Plato and More, in an attempt to create social order during the upheaval precipitated by the industrial revolution. Their vision was not one of an ideal city, but of 'ideal communes' for less than two thousand people, expressed in a traditional architectural vocabulary, which was unable to predict the radical changes brought to urban design through twentieth century technology (Fishman, 2003, p.28). Morris's 'News from Nowhere' borrows its title from More's Utopia, at once a 'no place or nowhere', yet quintessentially English. Morris's vision of society did not aspire to provide a blueprint for the future. Instead, he recognised the partiality, not only of his vision, but of *any* vision, composed within a particular set of circumstances which the authors propose to change. Inherently infused with the values of the less than perfect circumstances they argue warrant change (Pinder, 2005, p.54).

Following in their wake of the utopian socialists, were the 'ideal cities', as envisioned by the planners Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier. In contrast to the modesty and partiality of Morris's vision, these architects mistakenly believed they would ultimately find a solution to the urban and social crisis that defined their age, through the radical rethinking of urban planning as proposed by their 'ideal cities', which they claimed, distributed the benefits of the machine age to all. These visions were not conceived as a blueprint for specific projects. They represented 'ideal types' of future cities, in which the 'transformation of the physical environment is the outer sign of an inner transformation of the social structure' (Fishman, 2003, p.23). While the 'Corbusian city of towers' might have agreed with the middle classes he imagined living in *la Ville Contemporaine* (1922), the sin of Corbusier and Corbusians

..lay not in their designs, but in the mindless arrogance whereby they were imposed on people who could not take them and could never, given a modicum of thought, been expected to take them (Hall, 1988, p.240).

The modernist project was underpinned by a powerful technocratic state, through which planners would realise their dream of a future dominated by reason (Sandercock, 2003, p.30). These projects represent the conundrum of any utopian scheme, as singular visions which aspire to capture the needs of all, ultimately, they respond to the needs of no-one in particular. All understood that their 'ideal cities'

could not be constructed at once, but as a working model in the midst of the old society, which would create a movement of construction, becoming a revolutionary force. Thus they collectively believed that rebuilding cities could become the ‘master key’ to a just society (Fishman, 2003, p.30).

Utopian socialist writings were also to influence the future of planning. Edward Bellamy’s 1888 publication, *Looking Backward*, a vision of Boston in the year 2000, resonated with Howard’s concern for rationality, modernity and technology. For Howard’s primary interest was centred on finding modern solutions to the depopulation of the countryside and overpopulation of the Victorian city (Pinder, 2005, p.35). Howard referred to the composite parts of his garden city model as ‘a unique combination of proposals’, which drew inspiration from earlier utopian visions: Thomas More’s *Utopia*, Claude Nicolas Ledoux’s *cit   id  ale at Chaux* and Charles Fournier’s *phalast  re* (Ibid, p.38). His utopian legacy is a vision of the ordering and planning of space. Thus he is duly considered to be one of the founding fathers of modern town planning (Parker 2004, p.57). Post war, the influence of Howard’s garden city concept was visible in the construction of New Towns in close proximity to key British cities, including Glasgow. At the same time, in France New Towns were also constructed in response to an emerging housing crisis (Brenner, 2009, p.154).

Rejecting the utopian visions of le Corbusier and Howard, and opposing the restructuring of cities in the 1950s, the Letterists¹⁶ and Situationists attempted to construct other paths to an alternative utopianism, drawn from the street and everyday life (Pinder, 2005, p.157). The Situationists were a small group, founded by the French Marxist theorist, writer and film maker Guy Debord and the Dutch artist Constant. They were brought to public attention through their critique of modernism and capitalism, which began in the 1950s and flourished during a brief period from 1957-1962 (McDonough, 2009, p.1). They claimed their critique of urbanism or ‘unitary urbanism’, was not ‘a doctrine of urbanism’. They aspired to challenge rather than change thinking. For Constant, the idea of unitary urbanism emerged from

¹⁶ The Letterists International were a pre-Situationist formation (McDonough, 2009, p.3)

experiments like *derivé* or urban drifting and *psychogeography*¹⁷ on the one hand and research into construction by a few architects and sculptors on the other (Constant, 1960, cited in McDonough, p.112). Of particular interest to this thesis is Constant's New Babylon project, an imaginary city of the future, which engages with the tensions of the 'possible-impossible' dialect (cf. Lefebvre). He worked with the tensions that arise from that the questioning of prevailing assumptions about urban forms and the exploration of alternative futures, rather than trying to smooth them out (Pinder, 2005, p.259). Within this utopic space, conceived to float above the earth, he imagined that human behaviour would become obsolete in a mechanized age. Thus more available time would be created for people to engage in other activities, including the construction of mobile elements of its interior (McDonough, 2009, p.17). This sits in contrast to Le Corbusier's totalitarian view of planning to impose order, where 'the plan would be produced 'objectively' by experts' and the people's contribution was restricted to selecting who would administer it (Hall, 1988, p.210). Constant's long struggle to imagine this project is a reflection of the difficulties encountered by anyone, when trying to conceive ideal urban forms.

Sociologist Ruth Levitas defined utopia as 'the expression of the desire for a better way of being' (1990, p.8). In essence the space occupied by utopia encourages consideration of living under a particular set of conditions, which these desires and conditions create, yet often leave unfulfilled. This necessitates a critical examination of the 'what is' in the present, which utopian images have historically failed to provide. Born of a period of conflict, utopias offered only an image of 'resolved conflict', but are devoid of the means to achieve resolution (Servier, 1967, p.24). A degree of resistance to critique may be demonstrated by the existing order. As Lefebvre observed, 'it is serious, disturbing, to question anything concerning everyday life', which may lead to a demand for changes that would incur cost and involve too many consequences (1971, p.193). Forms of resistance to everyday life do exist, they can be found in the Situationist *derives*, through the enactment of an experimental drift through the city, which aimed to expose the vicissitudes of the consumer city (Hubbard, 2006, p.107). Traces of the situationists practices are still

¹⁷ In the 'Introduction To a Critique of Urban Geography', Guy Debord proposed that *psychogeography* aimed 'to study the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals' (Debord, 1955)

visible in urban environments today, notably the temporary appropriation of spaces in cities, which quickly become YouTube phenomenon. One such example is the ‘flash Mob’ performance by a group of dancers from ‘Living the dream’, a performing arts company for young people, who surprised commuters in St. Pancras Station London, on New Year’s Eve 2010¹⁸. Furthermore, the desire for a better future, which aspires to the ‘common good’, implies the application of judgment and values, which immediately evokes the question, whose values?

If architects (and urban planners) do indeed have a representation of space, whence does it derive? Whose interests are being served when it becomes operational’ (Lefebvre, 1974, p.44)?

It is for these reasons that utopian thought is often argued to be synonymous with authoritarianism and totalitarianism (cf. Harvey, Pinder) and has been effectively ‘discredited’ (cf. Lefebvre), in so doing reducing the possibility of imagining alternative futures. While criticism of utopias focus on attempts to provide a blueprint for a perfect future (Pinder, 2005, p.15); utopias may also be thought of as being subversive; in the spirit of More’s concept of utopia or the practices of the Situationists. Here, they have the capacity to satirise, to provoke criticism of socio-political structures that define the ‘what is ‘of the present and point to alternative spaces of possible futures. In this sense utopias play an important role, the alternative futures that utopias evoke may be used to inform political practices and call for action (Pinder, 2005, p.17).

The disappearance of a belief in *eutopia* might be attributed to the notoriety of dystopian works including *1984*, and *Brave New World*, compounded by the historical events of the twentieth century: Stalinism, the Holocaust and two world wars (Baeten, 2002, p.146). As Harvey observed, the appeal of utopias lay in their closed world of

¹⁸ ‘Living the dream’ in St. Pancras Station

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bnYpCiwV2Q>

Many more examples exist on Youtube:

‘Bristol’s biggest flashmob hits IKEA’ by facebook group in 2009, for three random five minute freezes over two hours. Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9inbOCxc7I>

While some interventions are designed to be fun, others are used to protest, such as the ‘The Great BP-sponsored sleep-in’, ‘a 4-minute flash mob art installation inside the Tate Modern museum, London, in 2011, to commemorate the first anniversary of the BP Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txi56ywMNPo>

certainties and rules which preclude the uncertainty and risk that accompanies taking a leap into an unknown future (2000, p.254). Whereas today, the geographically closed - spatial utopias of the past, have been 'rescaled by a globalised, fluid space of flows' which are central to free market utopianism (Baeten, 2002, p.146). According to Baeten, the collapse of communist utopianism was succeeded by a remaking of utopia in capitalist terms. Thus the capitalist dystopia that spawned the communist utopian projects of the early twentieth century has in turn become a utopia in the form of the 'neo-liberal utopian 'globalisation' project. As such neo-liberalism may be understood as a form of *revanchist utopianism*, reclaiming utopia in capitalist terms. Efforts to construct a free-market utopia have created in turn new dystopias, characterised by the return of forms of exploitation believed to belong to the past (2002, p.151).

The utopianism evoked by the *New urbanism*¹⁹, which emerged in the United States is an escape from the harsh realities of urban life, a flight from metropolis to 'community', where like minded individuals can find the imagined world of their childhoods (Sandercock, 2002, p.194). Through aspirations for a better quality of life it has spawned a social movement, charged with positive connotations of 'hope'; yet as Harvey warned,

it builds 'an image of community and a rhetoric of place-based civic pride and consciousness for those who do not need it, while abandoning those that do to their "underclass" fate' (2000, p.170).

Parallel to new urbanism is the mushrooming of 'gated communities' (or privatopias) protected by surveillance cameras (Hubbard, 2006, p.147). Panopticons intent on keeping 'the other' out. This resonates with a recurring theme in contemporary urbanism; that of 'security' and the need to create and preserve it (MacLeod and Ward, 2002, p.162).

Critics have suggested the current thrust of utopian writing is its failure to conceive of a utopia. The focus has shifted from what is imagined to the process of the struggle to imagine (Pinder, 2007, p.8). Counterarguments, such as those proposed by Levitas, disagree with any pronouncements on the death of utopia. There is less a failure to

¹⁹ According to The Congress for the New Urbanism, New Urbanism recognizes walkable, human-scaled neighborhoods as the building blocks of sustainable communities and regions. Source: http://www.cnu.org/Intro_to_new_urbanism (accessed 22nd August 2012).

conceive of utopia, than a difficulty to identify ‘points of intervention’ and ‘agents of social transformation’ in an increasingly complex social and political structure (1993, p.257). If a return to utopian thought is to be perceived as credible, then it is necessary to revisit traditional interpretations of Utopia, to understand why they have failed, to move beyond these static interpretations of perfection, to a more open, ongoing, progressive or ‘process-oriented ways’ (Pinder, 2002, p.238). The central role of ‘process’ is critical in urban thinking. The ‘points of intervention’ (cf. Levitas, 1993) that enables utopian thought to re-enter debates of city futures.

Reiterating what I said above, futures thinking inhabits the space between *eutopia* and *dystopia*. Today these narratives are to be found in Science fiction literature, a vast and rich source of inspiration for futurists who are looking to construct pictures of possible futures, extending beyond the short term future. As Slaughter pointed out, it provides images that lie beyond instrumental analysis, opening up ‘an “entire grammar of future possibility’’. These images feed the imagination and allow futurists to move beyond constructions of reality that draw on trends and forecasts (1998, p.1001). Science fiction constructs a *space of accommodation* to a technological existence, where the shock of the new is aestheticized and examined; a practice that has continued into the present electronic era (Bukatman, 1997, p.8). The importance of the contribution of this genre to the futures field has been extensively documented by a Professor of English literature, I.F. Clarke (1969, 1970, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1986). Jules Verne and the English author H.G. Wells are widely considered to be the founding fathers of science fiction. Wells also occupies a key role in the history of futures thinking. As the first of the modern-style forecasters, his work was the product of reason and imagination (Clarke, 1970, p.270). In the twentieth century, science fiction imagery moved from the medium of literature to film, beginning with Fritz Lang’s 1927 silent German expressionist film *Metropolis*, which represents graphically what a future city might look like under the influence of emerging technologies: cars and air travel.

The last thirty years has witnessed a paradigm shift in science fiction work which has taken up similar themes to those being explored in urban and futures scholarship at

that time. Since the early 1980s a sub-genre of science-fiction literature, *Cyberpunk*²⁰, has explored such questions. It is largely an extrapolative fiction, concerned with the ‘what if’ (Kitchin and Kneale, 2001, p.22). Cyberpunk is not intended to be used for prediction making. Rather, it holds up a mirror to current postmodern spatialities, it points to what society might become if certain paths were to be followed and opens up spaces to consider these future possibilities (Ibid, p.25). It presents its worlds from street level – a view from below (Bukatman, 1997, p.48). The global space occupied by data circulation or cyberspace²¹ emerged at the same time as world city scholarship. Its vision of the urban is post-industrial and dystopian. Specifically, cyberpunk celebrates the Los Angeles model of urban studies as a template for urban futures (Abbot, 2007, p.129). Ridley Scott’s 1982 film *Bladerunner*, set in Los Angeles, is an early example of cyberpunk, which draws heavily on the imagery of Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis*. *Bladerunner* is a critique of post-industrialism writ large in an imaginary Los Angeles. Created thirty years ago, it is a cautionary tale of a future global city gone astray. It is unsustainable.

2.3.2 The Emergence of Futures Studies as a Tool for City Imaginings

The primary purpose of futures studies is to give coherence and direction to planning processes (Glen and Gordon, 1997, cited in Cole, 2001, p.381).

I will now discuss Futures studies as an alternative approach to imagining the urban, beginning with a brief history of the emergence of future thought; then I consider how it is represented institutionally in both France and Scotland today. The logistics of how futures studies is deployed within the planning context of each case study will be considered in greater detail in chapter four.

The Enlightenment period brought in its wake many steps of refining futures thinking and directing it to pursue progress (Malaska, 2001, p.227). Condorcet revolutionized utopian writing; his image of a better society as described in the tenth prophetic chapter of his influential work ‘l’Esquisse’ (The Sketch), marked a paradigm shift from a different location in space to a different location in time - the future. He predicted coming social change, and identified the basic needs of all humankind and

²⁰ *Cyberpunk* – cyber refers to cybernetics and punk, an anti-establishment music and youth culture.

²¹ In the cyberpunk novel *Neuromancer*, Gibson coined the term cyberspace to acknowledge the new space occupied by digital technology

the existence of solutions to respond to these needs. In sum, for Condorcet, knowledge was the engine of progress (Clarke, 1987, p.200). The train of thought which addressed the rapid changes in society which began with Condorcet and later through Saint-Simon, was continued by Auguste Comte. In seeking to explain the society in which he lived, his intention was to change it (Clarke, 1986, p.338). The positivist works of Comte were continued by the nineteenth century social analysts: Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Spencer, who conducted their comparative and historical studies with predictive intent (Bell, 2003, p.100). Of particular interest to this thesis is another school of literature that was emerging at the same time. Although considered to be fiction, it included an element of prediction. This was later to be more commonly known as *science-fiction*, as discussed above.

As a modern episteme, futures thinking has been greatly shaped by late nineteenth century and early twentieth century utopianisms and the destruction wrought by two world wars. Prior to 1914, it was largely the military command that had the capacity to draw up comprehensive goals and ways of implementing them. The arrival of World War I exposed the inadequacies of nations to respond to this emergency, which required a civilian intervention for the organisation and distribution of resources. An experience which increased the organisational capacity for futures thinking in national institutions and society, and notably created ‘a social psychological disposition for doing so’ (Bell, 2003, p.11). World War II significantly reinforced the civilian effort that emerged in World War I. Leaders and civil servants were forced to make plans for the short term and longer term (post war) future, when ‘demobilizing for peace’ required futures thinking on a scale and intensity, never before seen in history (Ibid, p.19). At the same time, the German professor Ossip Flechtheim drew attention to the need for a systematic look at the future and coined the term ‘futurology’ (Ibid, p.385). This led to an organised approach to the study of the future, which began in the 1940s, with the emergence of American future orientated think tanks, closely associated with what President Eisenhower referred to as ‘the military–industrial’ complex (Steenbergen, 2005, p. 365). In 1945 the Americans continued operations with a Research and Development unit later known as the RAND Corporation (Bell, 1996, p.6). RAND initially focused on the future of military technology, and the containment of communism, although by 1970 it undertook work of a non-military

nature and indeed inspired futurist research which focused instead on 'peace' (Bell, 2003, p.29). RAND became a 'school' for futurists, noted for its long range forecasting capacities, including the Delphi technique and research which extended to non-computer and computer assisted games involving role-playing (Ibid, p.30). Despite its innovative contributions to futures research and methodology, RAND was a 'creature of its clients' (Ibid, p.7).

While futures was initially developed as a strategic instrument in the USA, in post war Europe, it was deployed as a tool to rebuild a 'shattered spirit', frequently involving leading international players and academics (Cole, 2001, p.375). In Europe, the club of Rome was an important influence in the development of futures thinking. Founded in 1968, by the Italian Aurelio Peccei, a member of the board of directors at Fiat and Alexander King a former Scientific Director of the OECD. They were united in their concern for the 'global problematique', a term that refers to the complexity and interrelationship of problems that had now surpassed traditional politics and institutions (Moll, 1993, p. 802). The Club has supported the publication of a number of key studies, notably 'The Limits to Growth' (cf. Meadows et al, 1972), a remarkable work in its time, which warned of the dangers of the future for mankind, published shortly before the energy crisis of 1973. The club of Rome still operates as a watchdog body; however its credibility has been compromised due to its close association with the establishment. In 1973, the World Future Studies Federation (WFSF) was conceived to support the development and implementation of future thinking and policy. This NGO was established at UNESCO in Paris, by individuals who sought cultural diversity, in contrast to its American cousin the World Futures Society (WFS) (Masini, 2005, p.362). Worldwide, a panorama of culturally contingent approaches to practicing futures has emerged since the war; although they are advancing towards very similar forms (Ibid, p.41). I will now discuss this praxis in the context of France and the UK.

The German occupation of France during World War II prohibited the state from developing any futures thinking capacities. This began immediately post war in 1946,

with the creation of the Commissariat Général du Plan (CGP) ²², under the auspices of General de Gaulle, for whom the plan was an ‘ardent obligation’. By the 1950s France was emerging as an ‘incubator’ of the modern futurist movement (Bell, 2003, p. 20). In 1957 the French Philosopher Gaston Berger founded the ‘Centre International de Prospective’ in Paris. It was Berger who brought back into current use the Latin term *prospective*, derived from the Latin verb *prospice*, it means to look forward, or into the distance.

Our civilization tears itself from the fascination of the past with difficulty. Of the future, it only dreams, and when it develops projects that are no longer mere dreams, it draws on a canvas on which the past is still projected. It is retrospective, with stubbornness. It must be "prospective" (Berger, 1957, p.16).

He justified the need for prospective at a time marked by rapid and accelerating change using his oft quoted analogy of a high speed car on an unfamiliar route, which he urged ‘should be equipped with powerful lights’ to project further ahead and into the dark because, ‘driving fast without being able to see anything would be madness itself’ (Berger 1967, p.20). Drawing on his background in philosophy, Berger’s prospective was profoundly humanistic, an *attitude* to the future which means,

[t]o look far away, because la prospective is a long term preoccupation, to look breadthwise, to take care of interactions, to look in depth, to find the factors and trends that are really important, to take risks, because far horizons can make us change our long term plans, to take care of mankind, because la prospective is only interested in human consequences’ (Godet and Roubelat, 1996, p.2, original emphasis).

Berger’s premature death in 1960 prevented him from developing his ideas further.

La Prospective has long been institutionalized in France. Beginning with the CGP in 1946 which implemented la Prospective at a national scale, then in the 1960s integrated into the works of the Délégation à l’Aménagement du Territoire et à l’Action Régionale (DATAR). Conceived as a national economic planning structure, DATAR²³ gave a spatial dimension to the priorities of successive national plans at regional level (Breuillard et al, 2007, p.103). Prospective studies, commissioned by the central state and individual ministries, have been applied to a multitude of subjects over the years (Masini, 2000, p.51). In 1960 Bertrand de Jouvenal created the not for

²² *Commissariat Général du Plan (CGP)* was responsible for the economic planning of France. In 2006 this institution was replaced by the Centre d’Analyse Stratégique (CAS).

²³ DATAR was subsequently restructured in 2006 and renamed DIACT (Délégation Interministérielle à l’Aménagement et à la Compétitivité des Territoires)

profit association *futuribles* ²⁴, initially supported by the American Ford Foundation, and later in 1974, by a journal bearing the same name that still continues to be published monthly. Today, *Futuribles* is a platform for the promotion and exchange of ideas in Prospective. Specifically, it occupies the role of ‘monitor’ for prospective, concerning the development of weak and strong trends in the strategic environment for businesses and organizations. Yet despite a strong academic tradition and institutional framework, French Prospectivists refute the idea of a French school of Prospective. They argue this ‘praxis’ is international in scope and that Prospective as deployed in France has been heavily influenced by Anglo-Saxon countries. Rather they favour the idea of an *international milieu of prospective*, in which a number of French specialists figure (Loinger, 2006, p.205).

Drawing on the work of Gaston Berger, prospective presumes that there is not *a* future to be examined, rather a *number* of possible futures. Prospective studies can be *exploratory* or *normative* or indeed both (Masini, 2000, p.17). Exploratory studies are concerned with knowledge of the past and present, from which the future is examined in terms of possibles, probables among the possibles, or plausibles among the probables. Possibles are alternatives which might happen, probables are alternatives that are likely to happen and plausibles are alternatives which have the highest probability of occurring. There are also desirable futures (cf. de Jouvenal), referred to as preferable futures in the USA, which are an expression of personal and social values (Masini, 2000, p.29). The desired futures identified in the case study projects to be examined in this thesis are aligned specifically with the values of sustainable development. Normative studies are propositions for action for a given future, which look for a transition in the present to realise or avoid this future (cf. Helmer) (Ibid, 2000, p.33-34, my translation). Normative studies are concerned with the relationship between the prospective study and desires, wishes, needs and specific values concerning the future. Masini is insistant that values are an integral part of prospective, because the future is influenced by desires or fears, at individual or collective level (Ibid, p.83). As de Jouvenal pointed out, the selection of a possible

²⁴ *Futuribles* is a corruption of future possibles; this term was first deployed in the 16th century by Luis de Molina, a Jesuit Priest.

future depends on agency and choices; it presupposes the existence of a system of values which appear desirable from, those which do not,

According to what criteria-based on both current and future values-are we going to set our scale of priorities? According to what are some, rather than others, going to make choices for all (de Jouvenal, 1986, p.130)?

The desirable (preferable) future that is selected as a result of this inquiry is not an end in itself. Rather the beginning of a future narrative, which aims to find processes in the present to facilitate the development of the desired future (Masini, 2000, p.18).

Prospective exercises present the opportunity to examine the ramifications of multiple possible futures, culminating with the selection of a desirable future worth pursuing. The choices made in the course of the futures project inform the future direction of planning documents, which in turn are subject to political constraints. While prospective exercises can and frequently do stop when the ‘future possibles’ have been identified, de Courson, an expert in Prospective territorial, advised that a prospective exercise should be followed by three further steps: The *project*, the *strategy* and an *evaluation* of the action undertaken (2005, p.46). The future takes shape around a ‘project’, a strategic future vision or master plan which sets out a course of strategic action for the territory in the medium and long term. The passage from project to action is a critical step, as de Jouvenal observed,

A man who acts with sustained intention to carry out a project is a creator of the future (1967, p.26).

The ‘intention’ which supports the passage from project to action is inscribed in a strategy, which responds to the questions: ‘what am I going to do’ and ‘how am I going to do it’ (de Courson 2005, p.49-50)? And finally evaluation - if Prospective is a reply to the question, ‘what might happen?’ then evaluation is a response to the question, ‘what happened’ (Ibid, 2005, p.51)?

While *la Prospective* is embedded in central governmental structure in France, now part of a ministry (DIACT), futures thinking elsewhere has not enjoyed the same level of acceptance. It has struggled to be understood as a discipline, partly because it does not fit the mould of what is considered to be a legitimate field of inquiry. In the particular case of the Scottish Government, there is no historical precedent of successful futures exercises; a difficulty compounded in a country where evidence based policy is the norm. James Dator, a prominent American researcher in this field,

claims futures studies is distinct from the plethora of growing 'studies' such as policy studies, environmental studies, all of which are 'sons and daughters of modernity'. Contrary to what these subjects might claim, are all striving to save the 'old world', by reforming it more or less radically (Dator, 1996, p.107). *Futures studies*, he claimed, is something else. So what is it?

The French school of Prospective is concerned not only with a study of the future, but also a will to shape it, whereas, futures studies offers a more open approach, 'mostly interested in the acquisition and development of knowledge, but not specifically concerned in the way of doing so' (Serra, 2005, p.84). This is where the more fluid futures thinking approach diverges from the rigour of la Prospective. What is of interest here is the notion of agency in a time of accelerating change - as Toffler has already warned over forty years ago,

In society today, 'knowledge is change' and accelerating knowledge acquisition, fuelling the great engine of technology, means accelerating change' (Toffler, 1970, p. 31).

American style technological forecasting developed in parallel to *La Prospective*. It was not until the 1980s that future studies recovered from the demise of the technocratic idea that it was possible to explore the future by scientific means (Van der Mulen, cited in Cole, 2001, p.379). Some futurists claim that forecasting has been replaced by the new paradigm of 'foresight' (Cole, 2001, p.379). *Foresight* is situated within the broad spectrum of futures studies. More recently, Foresight has been used interchangeably with other activities that take a long-range view of the future, including *forecasting*. This is misleading. As Martin (2010) pointed out, foresight and forecasting involve very different ontological assumptions about the future. Conventional forecasting is concerned with predictions that can be justified scientifically. It presumes the existence of only *one* probable future, linking the past and the present in a linear and deterministic manner. Foresight shares with la Prospective the notion of the existence of alternative futures. It explores the alternatives for development that are open in the present, followed by an analysis of the future outcomes of different paths of development (Martin, 2010, p.1441). The term foresight was brought into view through studies conducted by Irvine and Martin at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) of Sussex University, which leaned towards discussions on technological foresight and innovation. Their research in the

early 1980s favoured the term foresight, to underline the essential difference in approach with ‘technology forecasting’. Foresight in the UK continues to be driven by institutions and policy making.

Today, foresight is taken seriously by the British Government to inform decision making. A foresight capacity exists within UK central government, reporting directly to the Government Chief Scientific Adviser and Cabinet Office. It is located with the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills of the Government Office for Science. A similar futures capacity exists within the devolved Scottish Government. While some scholars contest the use of foresight as a synonym for Prospective (Serra, 2005, p.82), for the purpose of equivalence required in this thesis, I have adopted the translation of *la prospective* as *foresight* as proposed by Goux-Baudiment, on the grounds that both are advancing in the same direction (cf. Report Bailly, 1998) and the fundamental principles of the two approaches are very similar (systemic vision, critical, normative) (cited in Masini, 2000, p.22). Henceforth, I will use the term Foresight to refer to the approach that was deployed in the Glasgow City region. Having discussed the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that support future thinking, I will now consider the methodological framework used to explore the construction of the future narratives for the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow city region.

Chapter 3

Methodological Framework

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into three main sections: The first section elaborates on why this study has chosen to investigate a specifically international *comparative* urban research approach, as opposed to an in-depth study of a single site, with an exploration of any (dis)advantages that such an approach may incur. This includes a discussion of the challenges of being in and between two cultures. Section two describes the data collection methods deployed to understand the construction of the respective future narratives, followed by section three, the data analysis methods which discuss the challenges involved in this process. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitation of the methodological approach and the implications it carries for this work. What follows is the story of being a researcher in the field. It is a reflection of the challenges I encountered faced with the enormity and sheer complexity of exploring ‘futures’, and in two distinct places. It is an explanation of the tools that I deployed during the data collection and data analysis methods I engaged with, beginning with why I still firmly believe it is necessary to conduct comparative urban research.

3.1 An International Comparative Urban Research Approach: A Justification.

Yes, how we design our comparative studies does create an artifact of sorts, but this should not inhibit our efforts.....No single strategy of comparative cases—either the criteria of selection or the somewhat artifactual conclusions that can be drawn—is incorrect. We need many more of them at various levels and within different geopolitical structures (Abu-Lughod, 2007, p.403).

Of particular interest here is how future thinking has been operationalised in these two distinct settings to produce different effects. It is my contention that an international comparative urban research study provides insight into the qualities and limitations of each approach, within each particular ‘geopolitical structure’ (cf. Abu-Lughod), which an in-depth study of a single case (NPC region, Glasgow City Region) cannot provide. This requires consideration of a number of salient points, notably, what is

meant by comparative urban research and in what way(s) it can contribute to (or indeed detract from) understandings of places and their futures.

For Robinson, the fact that cities exist in ‘a world of cities’ implies that any statements about cities invites a comparative reflection,

What constitutes a city, how are cities organized, what happens in them, where are they going? – in a world of cities these and many other questions invoke a comparative gesture. The budding theorist finds herself asking of the many studies she reads from different parts of the world: are these processes the same in the city I know? Are they perhaps similar but for different reasons? Or are the issues being considered of limited relevance to pressing issues I am familiar with? (Robinson, 2011, p.1).

Yet within the dominant comparative urban discourse of global and world cities, there are many cities that are excluded from charts that map these cities. Lille, the capital of the NPC region and Glasgow are two such cities, literally taken off the map, as Figure 3.1 clearly illustrates. A comparison of ‘ordinary cities’ presents the opportunity to put these places back on the map and to learn from their respective narratives. How similar processes hit the ground and produce different effects - although this is often put forward as an argument *against* conducting comparative studies, on the grounds that urban experiences vary so much between places that nothing may be learned (cf. Dear 2005, Robinson, 2011). While the inherent differences in local governance structures and futures practices embedded in different cultures is messy, it is also the very essence of what makes these ‘ordinary’ city narratives of interest. Learning about and from the futures practices deployed in these ‘ordinary cities’, requires ‘luminous description’ of the distinctive features that are peculiar to these places and ‘an explanatory thrust as well’ (Katz, 2002, p.76).

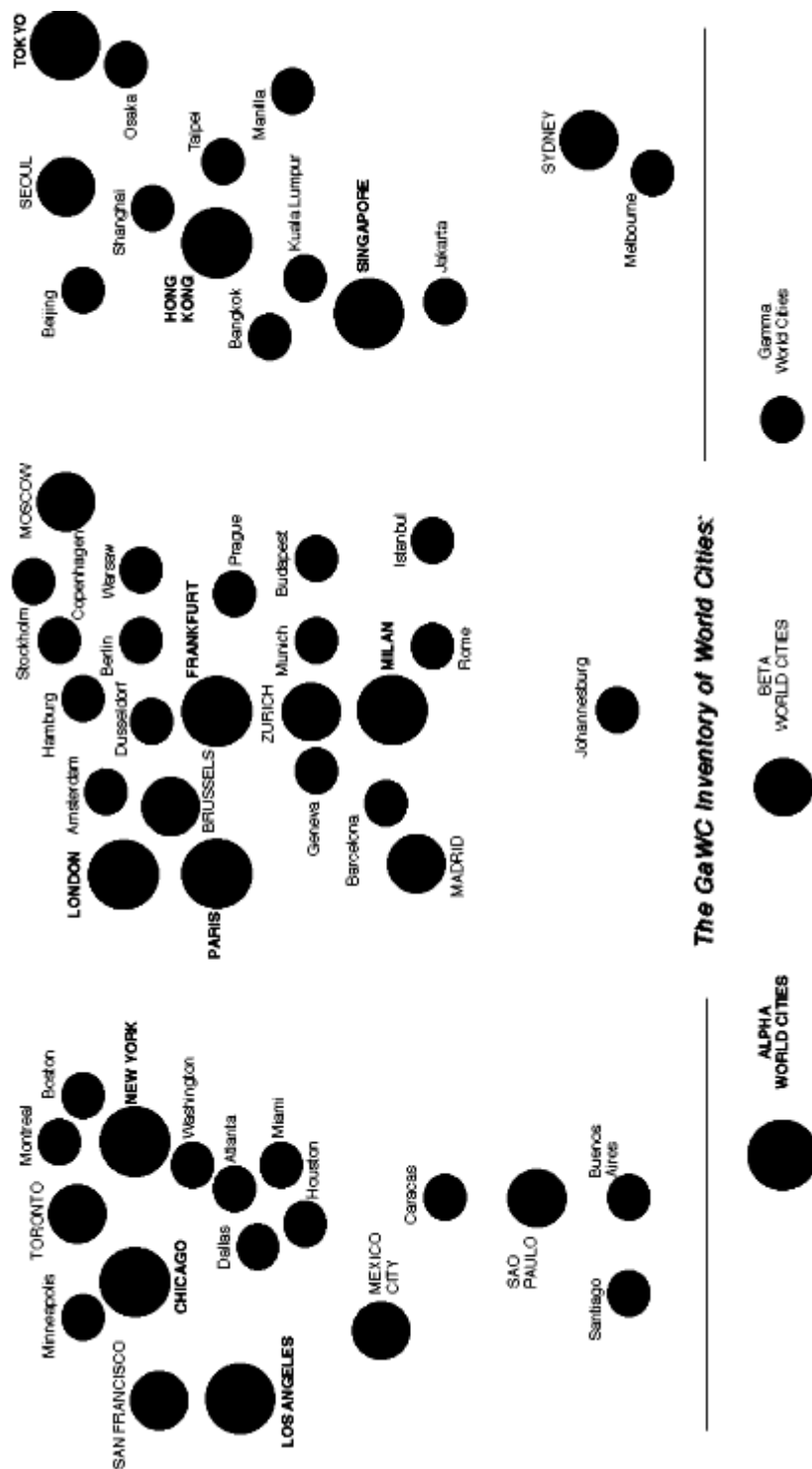


Figure 3.1: The World According to GaWC
Source: Beaverstock et al. (1999), p.456

Every researcher needs to think about what type of comparison they will deploy. Charles Tilly proposed four strategies for comparative analysis, which is considered today as the definitive typology:

- the *individualizing* comparison, which contrasts ‘specific instances of a given phenomenon as a means of grasping the peculiarities of each case’.
- the *universalizing* comparison aims to ‘establish that every instance of a phenomenon follows exactly the same rule’.
- the *variation finding* comparison is supposed to ‘establish a principle of variation in the character and intensity of a phenomenon by examining systematic differences among instances’.
- the *encompassing* comparison ‘places different instances at various locations within the same system, on the way to explaining their characteristics as a function of their varying relationships to the system as a whole’ (Tilly, 1984, p.82).

As Brenner pointed out, most of the world cities paradigm comparative studies conducted in the last twenty years might be classified within this framework. These studies often rely on more than one of the comparative strategies, but the most prominent contributions such as Sassen’s ‘The Global City’, have been grounded in the *encompassing* comparison, which facilitates an explanation of the convergence or divergence of cities structural positions in relation to worldwide spatial divisions of labour (Brenner, 2001, p.137).

This thesis relies principally on the *individualizing* comparison, which attempts to explain some of the distinctive features of the selected sites, which only become apparent when contrasted with the other case. The focus here is on specifically ‘local’ details. As Tilly explained, researchers must ensure that the logic of comparison, ‘fits our aims like a sweat-shirt and not like a straight jacket.....no-one should take the rules to require a search for the perfect pair of structures or processes’, hence for Tilly comparative research cannot aspire to ‘complete explanations’ (1984, p. 80). The sheer messiness involved in sorting out data from structures that are compatible yet rich in nuance implies that although a comparison of the selected sites provide some insight into what is happening in futures within France and Scotland and point to differences between nations, they are not to be understood as representative of what is

‘going on’ in futures in their respective countries. Despite the inherent challenges involved in a comparative urban study, the purpose of this study is to raise awareness of variables that are taken for granted in the ‘home’ country, while helping to ‘illuminate variables’ which remain invisible when analysing an individual case study (Abu-Lughod, 2007, p.403).

In Chapter One, I stated that this thesis takes seriously futures thinking as a means for looking at cities and outlined why futures studies is struggling to be mainstreamed in Scotland, due in part to the misunderstanding of what futures studies is and does. The two quotations which follow are indicative of these misinterpretations and underline the need for comparative research, particularly in the field of future studies, to ‘guard against narrow thinking’ (cf. May), clarify any confusion that surrounds this subject and contribute to the ongoing futures debate:

In my experience it is very difficult to look further ahead than five years, because so much changes, even over five years, the demography in particular...No I don’t think it is seen as relevant yet, that would only emerge over time. They would need to come up with some projections that over time turned out to be true for people to sit up and take notice (Mr. Charles Gordon, MSP and former leader of Glasgow City Council, interview 5th September 2007).

There is a current obsession in the UK with evidence based policy, to which my glib response is that the future hasn’t happened yet, there is no evidence. I actually had to say that in an interview to a very serious economist in Scotland who said, “how can you possibly justify this, where is the evidence?”(Mr. Brian Mellon, Frontline Consultants, interview 8th February 2008).

As the post-modern era emerged in the late 70s and early 80s, comparative urbanism declined in use, due to associations with the modernist project (Nijman, 2007, p.1). The renaissance of comparative urbanism is often attributed to debates surrounding the global-local dialectic, which implies that scholars move away from conceptions of cities as self-enclosed, bounded entities and consider them as ‘open, embedded and relational’ (Ward, 2008, p.407). This shift in perception carries methodological implications - consider for example Brenner’s (2001) critique of Abu-Lughod’s (1999) study, which drew attention to the methodological dangers of the dualistic conception of global-local interplay that is the focus of her study (Brenner, 2001, p.133- 134).

Yet such dualistic models of spatial scale also contain significant limitations as tools for the analysis of sociospatial transformations, particularly in the contemporary period.... In particular, this relatively static, zero-sum conceptualization of spatial scale leads to a bracketing of what is arguably among the most fundamental geographical dimensions of contemporary globalization—namely, the thoroughgoing reconfiguration of the relations between the global, the supranational/continental, the national, the regional, and the local scales during the past three decades.

The uncertainty of the future lends more weight to the need for comparative research, as past assumptions of similarity between and homogeneity within societies collapses; it is dependent on research that is sensitive to ‘differences and similarities in terms of the interactions between global and local’ (May, 2001, p.203). Reiterating what I said in the introduction to this thesis, this period is defined by the *velocity* (cf. Ache, 2000) of change, which Sassen claimed may have ‘heuristic potentials’ and might even contribute to urban comparatives,

The velocity of change itself makes legible novel patterns. When the object of study is cities or, more generally, urban regions, legibility is even more pronounced insofar as the material reality of buildings, transport systems, and other components of spatial organization are on the surface, so to speak. Further, when rapid transformation happens simultaneously in several cities or urban regions with at least some comparable conditions, it also makes visible the diversity of spatial outcomes that may result from similar novel dynamics. That variability of spatial forms, given similar underlying dynamics, makes legible the fact of diverse constraints shaping the spatialization of such dynamics across different cities and urban regions (Sassen, 2008, p.113).

The range of such urban comparatives presented by the possibilities exposed in Sassen’s (2008) study are restricted, because it claims the L.A. model posits a new urban form, explored through the focus of globalized firms and sectors; criterion which are applicable to a limited number of cities and preclude the experience of ‘ordinary’ cities such as Lille and Glasgow. The study of ‘globalisation’ has raised the call for comparison, in an era where spatial flows and communication networks link *all* cities, which Robinson argued compels urbanists to consider the experience of other places across the globe (Robinson, 2011, p.2).

A specifically futures-oriented comparative urban study conducted by Parrad (2005), addressed competitiveness as relevant to *all* cities whether prosperous or post-industrial and in the process of re-orientation and specifically within a metropolitan framework. Metropolitisation exacerbates competition between cities, for investment, jobs and new inhabitants, hence the importance of what she called the ‘politics of image’; cities must be known if they are to be attractive (Parrad, 2005, p.108). European cities (cf. Barcelona, Leeds, Dublin, Birmingham) are now anticipating the consequences of metropolitisation with the aid of ‘foresight’²⁵ to address competition between places, quality of life and social cohesion (Ibid).

²⁵ Foresight is an English language term used to refer to future thinking.

From the early 1960s to the early 1980s, urban scholarship was largely limited to mapping the process of economic restructuring – notably deindustrialization – and the solutions to the social distress which accompanies the collapse of industry, yet failed to engage in debates about the future of cities (Amin and Graham, 1997, p.412). It is my contention that specifically comparative urban *futures* research, of which there is very little at present, is critical to new understandings of places in the 21st century.

3.1.1 Comparing Like with Like: The Challenge of Being In and Between Two Cultures

In the introduction to this thesis I discussed the difference in perception and appropriation of future thinking between the France and Scotland as an important line of enquiry that I have explored in this thesis. This presents a challenge when ‘comparing like with like’ - future thinking in France exists at a different echelon of power and influence than in Scotland, yet it does not preclude a comparison between the two. By deliberately choosing an *individualizing* comparison (cf. Tilly, 1984), I have attempted to explain some of the distinctive features of the selected sites, which have helped shape the existence of future thinking at different echelons of power and influence in the respective countries.

My intention was to examine the experience of ‘post-industrial’ places that had undergone decline and recognized the need to construct a way forward and specifically the implications of future thinking as a tool in that process. I believe the NPC region and the Glasgow City region to be ideal candidates for comparative analysis because of the numerous parallels between them, beginning with a similar narrative of decline, where the demise of heavy industry in both instances, precipitated a population exodus, leaving in its wake high unemployment, poverty and social distress. Prior to starting this thesis, I was aware that the NPC region in France had not only recently conducted a futures exercise but also had a culture of future thinking that spanned forty years. A review of government documentation presented the future of the city of Glasgow as a Metropolitan Regional question. This interpretation of the limits of space sat well with the futures data I had collated for the NPC, which also favored a Metropolitan Regional approach and satisfied questions of ‘appropriateness’ and the requirement to compare ‘like with like’. Consequently, I decided to use this scale as a template for my thesis.

Translations between languages, although laborious were often interesting and productive. I was compelled to question how I understood terms and the different stories that might result from the nuances of translation or indeed misinterpretation. When problematising language and meaning, the ‘politics of translations’ must be considered, which Smith (1996, p.160) observed ‘applies to research in ‘home’ and ‘foreign’ languages since both involve interpretation and appropriation’ (1996, p.163). Rather than being a difficulty, Smith sees this as more of an opportunity to study the ‘in –between’ or hybrid spaces produced between these languages which she argued created insight by dis-placing forms of understanding about the researchers home language, which lead to ‘new conceptual places’ (Smith, 1996, p.165). Referring to the linguistic barrier, Dina Viao observed,

Language is a whole way of thinking: not just the translation but how you think (Viaou, cited in Desbiens and Ruddick, 2006, p.4).

Being in and between two (three) ‘cultures’, refers to being an architect, now doing geography as an apprentice futurist. The resulting ‘slippage’ between the distinct spaces occupied by an architect’s gaze and geographer’s gaze has enriched and often challenged my knowledge of the urban and brought new layers of meaning, intertwined with the vocabulary of futurists who have their own ways of ‘being in the world’. It was the term *human* that inspired me to study with human geographers; a term that professional practice has taught me was markedly absent in developer driven world of architecture and urban design. This experience has forced me to think *very* differently and to such an extent, that I can only really equate it to the learning of a new language. The most obvious examples are the terms ‘space’ and ‘place’, which have very different understandings in the fields of architecture and human geography. For an Architect, the term space immediately evokes the idea of a volume wrapped in walls, a floor and a ceiling; it is closed and static. Whereas space according to Thrift, ‘is the fundamental stuff of human geography’ (2009, p.95). It draws on a vast and rich literature, too vast to explore here, so briefly I will draw on Geographer Doreen Massey’s understanding of these concepts. In contrast to static architectural space, for Massey, space is

...always under construction....a product of relations-between, relations which are necessarily embedded material practices which have to be carried out, it is always in the process of being made. It is never finished; never closed. Perhaps we could imagine space as a simultaneity of stories so far (2005, p.9, my emphasis).

If space is ‘a simultaneity of stories-so-far’, then for Massey, places are

collections of those stories, articulations within the wider power-geometries of space. Their character will be a product of these intersections within that wider setting, and of what is made of them. And, too, of the non-meetings-up, the disconnections and the relations not established, the exclusions. All this contributes to the specificity of place (2005, p.130).

For architects and planners the concept of place is usually anchored in the notion of ‘place making’. Traditionally architects and planners undertook this work in terms of building their way out of a design problem. However, understandings of place have changed; urban planners Stephen Graham and Patsy Healey have called for different conception of place ‘based on relational views of time and space’, which they argued cannot be achieved through plans and planning discourses alone, instead, they called for planning to consider ‘*relations and processes* rather than *objects and forms*’ (1999, p.629 and p.642, original emphasis).

A pivotal moment in the course of this fieldwork came during a conference of the *Franco-British Planning Study Group*, whom I was fortunate to meet in Lille in 2008. This group, composed of academics and experienced urban professionals, had also wrestled with the interpretation of meaning between the two cultures, as discussed in their 2007 publication, ‘Spatial Planning Systems of Britain and France: A Comparative Analysis’, in which each chapter was written by two authors, one from either side of the English Channel. I drew comfort from their experience that translations, particularly those of key terms, are not always obvious, as discussed by Breuillard and Fraser,

The search for a term capable of including the notions of *Town Planning* in Great Britain and *Urbanisme* in France as revealed in this case and the resolution of this problem which greatly disturbed the choice of a suitable title for this book (2007, p.17, my translation).

Repeated confrontation with difference, born of being in and between fields, was at times challenging and yet it permitted me to see beyond the ‘between-state’ of two languages and cultures and opened up spaces that I was not aware of, that required further investigation.

Perhaps the most striking example of ‘confrontation’ with language into the assumptions of the clarity of meaning carried by the home language was the nuance of the word ‘values’. According to one interviewee, a Canadian futurist who is familiar

with both French and Scottish interpretations of value, the differences between the two may be described as follows, firstly in France, where value is disconnected from the project budget, it evokes the notion of ethics,

I guess in the Foresight Futures studies point of view.... There's the distinction between the normative and what is called the non-normative, so there's a distinction between what you call the French values which are moral or ethical values, or qualitative values as opposed to quantitative values. Where people think that falls into the normative side of things which is completely legitimate, but then you're talking about the normative and then you want to talk about the non-normative and you want to quantify things you are talking about non value laden, but I would tend to call that non values related, I tend to add an "S" because there are always more than one value.....So the whole sort of simplistic dichotomy between normative/non normative, to me it's just a dead end (Mr. Riel Miller, XperidoX:Futures Consulting , interview 6th March 2009).

Whereas in Scotland, the understanding of value is quite different,

Yeah, it's one of the things that is actually quite striking about Scotland and that I appreciate as an economist, they are not foreign to Smith. Smith means something in Scotland, certainly with the people I was dealing with, so there is certainly a vocabulary and a willingness to think about it in the way you think about the future and wealth and value, I tend to use the word wealth, rather than value, I use the term value added a lot (Mr. Riel Miller, XperidoX:Futures Consulting , interview 6th March 2009).

In the particular context of national planning in Scotland, which aspires to sustainable development, it is embedded in an economics discourse. One interviewee who wished to remain anonymous proffered an explanation for this,

It is economically sustainable, not environmentally sustainable...The gist of it was that they wanted a planning policy everywhere that said all development must be sustainable. ...They could have the policy but they would be totally tied up in the courts by appeals...and that it would be really difficult to have a legally robust definition of sustainable development, to actually have just a blanket national planning policy that all development will be sustainable because it wasn't possible to define it in terms that would give it any teeth (Interview, anonymous, 2nd September, 2008).

Although conscious of the nuance inherent in this term, until the interview process, I was unaware the difference between the two was quite so pronounced and culturally anchored. Thus reminded of the danger of complacency when translating, I was forced to reflexively question how *I* had considered the interpretation and appropriation of words. While aspiring to be neutral throughout the research process, I now realise this is impossible, and acknowledge that the data presented in this thesis is inherently infused with my own values.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The second section of this chapter addresses the methods deployed to explore the construction of the narratives of possible futures in France and Scotland. My intention was to use the semi-structured interview process as the principal qualitative technique,

supported by other qualitative method(s) as their need became clearer during the unfolding of events in the field. It also applied to more than the application of ‘technical skills alone’ (Wolcott, 2005, p.24). The bulk of qualitative methodologies drew on the semi-structured interview process of individuals who were involved directly or otherwise in the construction of the respective future narratives. Such data cannot be considered in isolation; it can only clarify part of the narrative construction. Thus, it was necessary to look ‘behind the scenes’ and investigate ‘critical events’ that informed the narrative through textual and visual analysis techniques of stories and pictures which are explored in greater detail in the chapters that follow. In retrospect this was a messy approach, yet it was the right approach for the subject under investigation.

3.2.1 Selecting the interviewees

An initial web search of appropriate government, planning and futures sites provided a list of potential interviewees, later confirmed and supplemented by pilot study interviews. This exercise enabled me to sketch a ‘who’s who’ in futures and planning in both Scotland and France and gain access to potential gatekeepers and interviewees, as described in the appendix. I purposely sought to interview individuals who had participated in the futures exercise and the different institutions that supported or indeed initiated this process, made possible when provided with the details of the selection process for the futures participants as described in chapter four. These exercises drew on a broad range of participants in both countries, including: academics, architects, economists, local government institutions (Planning departments and sustainable development departments), central government futures practitioners and planners, politicians and a planner from the OECD. Through snowballing, I was also able to access the facilitators of both future exercises with a view to understanding exactly *how* such an exercise was conducted and the method (if any) deployed (and by whom) and to what ends.

Engaging with interviewees implies recognition of the ‘fields of power’ to be negotiated and consideration of how research both deploys and confronts power, ‘whose power, where and under what conditions (Katz, 1994, p.69)?’ I agree with Rose’s (1997, p.311) observation that the power dynamics to be negotiated in the field, as identified by Katz, are of such enormity that they are ‘simply unanswerable’

and any attempt to do so risks performing the ‘God-trick’. Yet it is essential to acknowledge that power relations help shape the contours of the field *and* the complicity of researchers in their construction. Thus positionality requires an understanding of how the difference or distance between researcher and researched in the landscape of power is constructed, problematized as ‘spaces of betweenness’ (cf. Katz, 1994).

Although some of the respondents I contacted were not available, or simply did not reply to a request to be interviewed, I was very fortunate to obtain a high response rate and conducted forty six interviews, the names of whom are recorded in the appendix. The interviewees were largely drawn from the public sector, which has produced a number of documents to support the futures process in both countries. Consultation of these documents enabled validation of much of the data I collected during the interview process, coupled with similar answers to the same question from more than one respondent in the same place. Validation was also enabled by triangulation with multiple sources and methods.

3.2.2 The Semi-structured interview process: Stories Told by Interviewees

The interview has a script, at least in outline, and a stage on which conversation occurs. However, it has a plot which develops rather than being static. The waxing and waning of the interview will fashion script, roles and stage sometimes unpredictably. There is plenty of room for improvisation, both by the interviewer and by the subject; each is complicit in the production of a narrative (Cloke et al, 2004, p.150).

The contribution of the semi-structured interview process was critical to the exploration of the individual ‘stories’ that composed the construction of the respective future narratives. My intention was to use Tilly’s (1984) individualizing comparison to explore the distinctive features that characterise these situated knowledges, by asking the same questions in both countries of those directly involved in ‘futuring’ and others concerned by the wider ‘futures’ story. An individualizing comparison also lends itself to understanding specifically ‘local’ details, which provides a sense of where the interviewees were speaking from. Understanding and analysing these situated knowledges also required that reflexively, I learn to view the world of the participants I interviewed as they themselves see it (Baxter and Eyles, 1997, p.506).

Conscious that where an interview is held, 'makes a difference' (cf. Valentine 2005, Denzin 1970, Elwood and Martin, 2000), I was wary that conducting interviews on the interviewee's territory i.e. their place of work, might influence the power dynamics of the interview. The "'micro-geographies' of spatial relations' as described by Elwood and Martin (2000, p.649) dictated that I find a location that was conducive to both the researcher and participant being able to speak freely and openly. For the convenience of the participants, I agreed to conduct the interview at a time and place that was suitable for them and for the most part this was in an office environment, rarely in a 'neutral' space such as a café. Although Cloke et al warned that the achievement or otherwise of rapport is influenced by whether the selected space reinforces the power dynamics in favour of the researcher or the interviewee, I can only speculate on the perceived positionality of the interviewees and the response given in the space of their choice (2008, p.158). As Elwood and Martin pointed out, the micro-geographies of sites help construct the identity and power of the interviewee, who might consciously or otherwise position themselves in response to the roles or identities that construct their understanding of different places (2000, p.654). As a mature student, my age was perhaps an advantage. I was less intimidated than I might have been as a younger researcher and any notions of territorial (dis)advantage diminished as the interviews gathered pace; I was more attuned to *what* was being said, as opposed to *where* it was being said. Evidently, some respondents had more to say than others, or were perhaps more at ease or experienced with the process of being interviewed.

Finally, although the interview process was always a one to one scenario, it provided an opportunity for field observation, albeit limited. While the physical place of interview was not a line of inquiry that I actively pursued, reflexively I was aware that the backdrop or 'scenery' of all interviews was part of the wider narrative. This became apparent while waiting to interview in the various reception spaces or walking through other open plan office spaces to access the office of the participant, particularly in Scotland. Futures practitioners frequently deploy a technique called 'horizon scanning' to identify emerging social trends. I conducted some 'horizon scanning' or 'observant participation' of my own. This provided insight into the dynamics (gender bias) of the organization, or more specifically, a department within an organization, in which the participant was embedded. Embeddedness in a

particular work culture is also influential in shaping the knowledges of the interviewees, not only in how they see the world, but also the vocabulary they use to articulate this view, all of which may be used to exert power, as I was made aware during the interview process.

3.2.3 Gatekeepers and Belonging

Snowballing secured smooth access to the majority of interviewees. The only real resistance I encountered was with access to political decision makers in Scotland and despite gaining interviews, information surrounding current futures activity of the Scottish Government. During the course of the interview process, I discovered that other public sector institutions and private consultants had also encountered difficulty engaging with the Scottish government on the subject of futures questions. I am wary of using the term 'elite', which as Smith suggests segregates people into 'dualistic categories of 'elite' and 'non-elite' (or 'powerful' and 'vulnerable')'. All members of society she claimed, are subject to the effects of power, including those involved in making or influencing decisions who are themselves subject to the decisions of others (2006, p.645). While Smith considers labelling individuals as 'elites' problematic due to the uncertainties of determining exactly who is exerting what kinds of power (2006, p.646); this term is prevalent in human geography literature. It is important to acknowledge the experience of other authors (cf. Sabot, 1999, Herod, 1999), that it is difficult to access those they identified as 'elites', because they are accustomed to negotiating (or indeed preventing), the terms and conditions of access. Hertz and Imber (1995, cited in Smith, 2006, p.648) claimed that mounting barriers to obstruct others in society contributes to the very definition of a community as 'elite'. Might the behaviour of these 'elites' be attributed to lack of time, or apathy, or both; or are there other reasons? Could this sustained resistance to engage with futures questions point to the existence of 'defensive elites', or 'counter elites' (also dubbed 'threatened elites') (Moyser and Wagstaff, 1987, p.185, cited in Sabot, 1999) who are reluctant to co-operate and if so why? Is the unknown territory that the future inhabits too dangerous politically to engage with, alluding to the possibility of 'vulnerable elites' (Smith, 2006, p.650); or indeed are there official futures? The 'noisy silences' (Tamboukou, 2008, p.111) surrounding this contentious subject warrant further investigation.

Many scholars assume there is a clearly discernible dichotomy concerning the researcher's positionality as either 'insider' or 'outsider' (Herod, 1999, p.320). Reflecting on my own experience and those of others scholars (cf. Herod, 1999, Sabot, 1999) as a foreign or local researcher, as 'insider' or 'outsider', how researchers are perceived by others in these terms is more complex. As a foreigner, resident in France for more than fifteen years, I became aware, that I was neither entirely an outsider, nor an insider. I was in fact *both*. Inhabiting sometimes disconcerting spaces, determined by my subject position, that Katz described as 'spaces of betweenness' (1994, p.72). The spaces of insider or outsider are not confined to those inhabited by a foreign researcher in France. They also refer to spaces occupied by an expatriate Scot, returning to Glasgow years later, to do fieldwork. As a native Glaswegian, interviewing other native Glaswegians, I was received as someone on home turf, yet I found this experience quite unsettling. The Glasgow I know no longer is. It was now in the past, it belonged to the 1970's and 80s. The Glasgow of the future I discovered through fieldwork; while the Glasgow of the present and the recent past (1992 – present) was clearly unknown territory. This became apparent as the interviewees told stories according to their own 'version of narrative logic' (Denzin, 2001, p.25-26); sometimes revealing facets of the city I was not aware of, which are explored in greater detail in the chapters that follow. This experience called into question not only my 'knowledge' of the social landscape of my home town, but also the stability of my positionality as 'insider'.

3.3 Data Analysis Methods

The fifth section of this chapter is concerned with how I assembled and subsequently made sense of the data I collected during the research process. Futuring is a creative group activity, which involves brain storming style techniques, to construct a picture of what the future *might* look like. The data analysis methods deployed to explore how the narrative was produced are threefold: verbal, visual and textual. Verbal relates to an analysis of the bulk of my research findings, composed of the 'stories' recounted during the interview process. Reiterating my intentions as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, I am interested in the *production* and *destination* of the narrative. Words that also apply to the significance of the images and texts embedded in the narratives of decline and future narrative, specifically how they were produced and how they resonate in the public imagination. The visual aspect is a reference to

images past, present and indeed virtual; the ‘wordless conversations’ (cf. Salmon) of narrative research, which refer to gesture, the unspoken and the images that infuse these narratives (Riessman, 2008, p.83). Whereas the textual dimension is concerned with other stories that influence the narratives of decline and future narrative, including literature or media representations. This following section concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the methodological approach, specifically the implications it carries for the research findings.

3.3.1 Narrative Inquiry: The Story of Handling Research Material

By focusing on narrative, we are able to investigate not just how stories are structured and the ways in which they work, but also who produces them and by what means; the mechanisms by which they are consumed; and how narratives are silenced, contested or accepted (Andrews et al, 2008, p.1).

One of the criticisms of narrative is that of its subjectivity (Webster and Mertova 2007, p.20); which requires that researchers must ‘recognise and come to terms with their/our partial and situated ‘subjectivity’ rather than aspire to an impossibly distanced ‘objectivity’ (Crang and Cook, 2007, p.13). Thus when revisiting data, the question arises as to which ‘stories’ should be incorporated in the research and which discarded. This required consideration of the work of Baxter and Eyles (1997, p.506), who claimed that an important aspect of rigour in qualitative research, is the ‘extent to which a piece of research is believable, hence worthy of attention’, similar to Lincoln and Guba’s notion of ‘trustworthiness’ (1985, p.290). Story selection was largely determined by the process of coding. This was a laborious but critical aspect of the qualitative research, which consequently shaped the course of the narrative presented in this thesis and as Crang (2005, p.226) advised, required that I carefully consider an analysis of the relationship between ‘category and material, theory and evidence’. The sheer volume of data dictates that not everything can be used, in terms of being visibly represented in the pages of this thesis. The ‘sifting and sorting’ (Cloke et al, 2004, p.216) that coding inherently involves facilitated the reduction and simplification of data and the pieces that were left on the cutting room floor have directly or otherwise influenced the content of the chapters that follow.

My intention was to examine how planners have engaged with future thinking in two distinct places, a complex activity which dictated that I was open to alternative ways of exploring how this could be achieved. When reviewing the interview transcripts, I

was aware of repeatedly hearing that the ‘journey’ of the futurist/planner during the construction of the future narrative was of greater interest than the content of the document produced; the reasons for this are explored in greater detail elsewhere in this thesis. Yet I believe it is necessary to understand the work that these narratives do; to achieve this I intend to frame them as a performance to analyse the underlying narratives and the performative repertoires enrolled at different points in time, how they change over time, the moods within them and notably the different frameworks that underpin them.

Narrative inquiry is concerned with the description of time place and event (scene, plot, character and event) in the composition of the ‘narrative sketches or critical events’ that constitute the narrative (Connely and Clandinin, 1990, p. 11). My intention was to understand how the situated narrative knowledges (cf. Harraway, 1991) that produced these narratives and subsequently shaped them came to be, by tracing the principal lines of the historical and philosophical practices of the planners in both settings, from the period of decline, moving towards the narratives of possible futures, punctuated by specific turning points or ‘critical events’. This narrative framework is in effect a situated genealogy of future *practices* in these places.

Ricoeur claimed that ‘narrative instance’, or narration within the narrative, is characterised by two participants, the narrator and the real or virtual receiver or audience (1985, p.85). It is from this perspective that I have conducted my research, with the intention of exploring three particular points: Firstly, whose vision is it that is being narrated and to what ends? - A recurring question in this thesis. Secondly, who or what is the destination or ‘receiver’ of this work? Finally, how are these visions subsequently accepted (or not) or indeed silenced.

Further questions thus emerge that require exploration. The interviewees themselves are subject to the interplay between the notions of ‘point of view’ and ‘narrative voice’ (Ricoeur, 1984, p.88). Point of view is concerned with seeing the ‘where’ of that which is being narrated, whereas narrative voice is an exploration of who is speaking. There are also stories within stories to be considered. Each participant brings their own set of beliefs and ‘core stories’ (Simmons, 2006, p.54) to this process. As the author of this work, I myself am one of the participants. Reflexively,

as both researcher and narrator representing the multitude of ‘points of view’, I became aware that the *who* is speaking of narrative voice carries a burden of responsibility. Although I did not participate in the futures exercise, my ‘point of view’ and ‘narrative voice’ are informed by research conducted for this thesis and indeed my own biography or ‘core story’.

Narrative research is frequently criticised because of its subjectivity and the inherent danger of becoming trapped in what Connely and Clandinin (1990, p.10) called the ‘Hollywood plot’, and Spence (1986, cited in Clandin and Connely, 1990) ‘narrative-smoothing’, whereby the narratives is distorted so that everything works out ‘well’ in the end. However, ‘narrative-smoothing’, is a continuous process during both data collection and writing phases of the narrative. Without consciously ‘smoothing’, my interpretation of the stories changed as the interview process advanced and I was forced to revise my understanding of earlier stories, by addressing new points of view as they emerged from the multitude of stories I was hearing. The resulting interpretation is far from ‘smooth’. The messy nature of comparative research enabled the exposure of gaps that only come to light when later trying to piece things together, thus the interpretation of the stories I heard does not presume to present a smooth narrative, it is ‘bumpy and heterogeneous’ (Law, 2007, p.144).

3.3.2 Stories and Pictures as tools Embedded in the Narrative of Decline and Future Narrative.

Narratives are not constructed in isolation; they have recourse to textual and visual material or ‘wordless conversations’ (Salmon, 2008, p.80) from the past and present, which tell stories of their own. These behind the scenes ‘events’ represent a moment in time; they are part of the narrative of decline and in some cases ‘turning points’ in the future narrative. The narratives of decline are punctuated by images constructed by others, imaginings that still resonates today. As tools embedded in the narrative of decline that instigated the ‘ruptures’ with the past, they have lead to the quest for possible future(s). Photographs of the coal fields in the NPC region demonstrate this quite clearly. These imaginings are of interest because they are historically contingent, they frame why it was necessary to move beyond the representations they portray so that new possible futures could be imagined.

I have chosen to examine the futures narratives of the NPC region and Glasgow City Region, by discussing the notion of regional discourse as a ‘performative discourse’ (Bourdieu, 1980, p.66). My aim was to explore how performativity predisposes city elites to some enact some practices, rather than others. I do so through the example of the OREAM du nord, a futures exercise conducted in the NPC region in 1971.

3.3.3 Limitations of Methodological Approach

It is necessary to acknowledge the limitations that shaped the course and hence the results of the qualitative approach to fieldwork. As with any project, time and finances are pertinent issues, particularly when a project is self funded and during an economic crisis. The ‘unfolding of events’ in the field, as described above, dictated how I gathered data. Although snowballing presented an opportunity to contact potential interviewees and by pass gatekeepers, it also has its limitations – it excludes the possibility of contacting others who fall outside of this network and who may have had a valid contribution to make to this project. I considered the pros and cons of the different methodological approaches that were appropriate for the analysis of data pertinent to this work, yet it is necessary to acknowledge that no set of methods can be considered as flawless or all encompassing.

While presenting an abridged understanding of futures, this study does provide insight into what is ‘going on’ in futures in France and Scotland, exposing gaps in this ‘story’ which as yet cannot be filled. The lack of interaction with political decision makers, particularly in Scotland, was disappointing and has consequently shaped the contents of subsequent chapters in this thesis. Yet the very presence of these ‘noisy silences’ (cf. Tambouku) tell a story of their own; and raises questions that warrant further investigation. As narrator, I was also a part of the data collected, which implied the careful consideration of my positionality and those of others, who are represented in this work and the data presented in the chapters that follow (Squire et al, 2008, p.17). Above all, as narrator of this story, I can only recount what I have been told. I did not participate in these future exercises; as such this narrative does not aspire to present the ‘truth’ (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). It is based on my understanding of what I heard and the weaving together of the pieces of the story I have been fortunate to share with the participants in the interview process. One of the main threats to ensuring qualitative validity is ‘the misinterpretation of meanings expressed through interview

conversations' (Baxter and Eyles, 1997 p. 509). Thus, the goal of the researcher is the interpretation of 'stories' related during the interview process such that they be understood by those who constructed them and by the scientific community.

Being between disciplines and cultures required permanent translations between them; yet provided insight into the 'spaces of betweenness' that I found productive in various ways: It opened up spaces that I was unaware of and otherwise would not have been privy to and called into question any existing 'knowledges' I *thought* I had acquired, by pitting them against interpretations between places, or the positionalities of researcher/researched within places. Finally, while I aspired to remain neutral throughout the research process, I recognize that 'value neutrality is not attainable' (Ley and Mountz, 2001, p.237). This work is inherently infused with my own values and disrupted by the partial accounts of experiences and meaning provided by participants. As such, I am compelled to acknowledge the partiality of my interpretation of the data in the chapters that follow and the subsequent limitations of any conclusions I have drawn from them.

Chapter 4

Narratives of possible urban futures: The Nord Pas de Calais Region and the Glasgow city Region

I like the idea that everyone has a story to tell, that each of us is contributing to a made world for others. Every person is one pixel in a bigger picture (Antony Gormley, The Times, March 19, 2010 interview Janice Turner).

4.0 Introduction

This quotation from the artist Anthony Gormley resonates with the futures approaches deployed in the case studies discussed in three inter-related sections that constitute this chapter. I begin by examining the context of the emergence of future thinking in the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow City Region. As discussed in Chapter one, my intention was to examine the experience of ‘post-industrial’ places that had undergone decline and recognized the need to construct a way forward through the creation of narratives of possible futures. The practice of future thinking in these distinct settings is subsequently divided into the second and third sections. In the second section, ‘Lost in translation’, I examine the futures thinking experiences of the Nord Pas de Calais Region and Glasgow City Region. This raises several questions, which the third section aims to explore: The ways in which futures thinking has to adapt as soon as it leaves the intellectual space of a futures exercise and migrates to the messy realities of the policy making space. I do so by focusing on how future thinking becomes diluted by the various realities of politics, finance, context and policy tourism, neoliberalism and the migration of policy. This chapter concludes by briefly surmising the findings in the two case study projects.

4.1 The context of the emergence of future thinking in the Nord Pas de Calais Region.

We need to have a vision of the future and the stamina to reach it (Starkman, 2005, p.232).

I begin this section with a quote from the Director General of the *Agence de développement et d'urbanisme de Lille Métropole* (ADULM)²⁶, the capital of the Nord Pas de Calais Region, which in a few short words epitomizes the inherent challenges of thinking about the long term future. In the case of the NPC this was achieved through the medium of territorial prospective, which can be defined as follows,

²⁶ Office for Development and Urbanism of the Metropolitan area of Lille

Territorial prospective is an intellectual process and practice which consists of asking a concrete question "what can happen to this - or my – territory" (de Courson, cited in Goux-Baudiment, Soulet, and de Courson, 2008, p.12, my translation)?

....a way of thinking and implementing the future of a territory, based on a collective approach. This collective intelligence on which it leans, offers a better chance of moving from the vision to the project, then from the project to lived reality (Goux-Baudiment, cited in Goux-Baudiment, Soulet and de Courson, 2008, p.12, my translation).

Here, territory refers to the NPC region and its composite parts. The term territory may be understood as more than the defined limits of geographical space, governed by an administrative body,

A territory is a composite: there are structures, roles, building works, organisational "systems": it is a "located social machine" of sorts. A territory is also an experience, an identity, subjectivity, a system of representation, of conscience. A territory is a phenomenon that is in "resonance with the world", in permanent reactivity, relative to the context in its various meanings. And a territory, is a management framework and governance of the public eye, an entity that will "manage" itself, which drives itself (Loinger and Spohr, 2005, p.30, my translation).

Through its contribution to the collective construction of projects, territorial prospective has participated in the modernization of public action and a new functioning of territorial organization or 'new governance' (Delmarre and Malhomme, 2002, p.18).

Prospective thinking began in France immediately post war in 1946, with the creation of the Commissariat Général du Plan, under the auspices of General de Gaulle, for whom the plan was an 'ardent obligation'. The 1950s and 60s were a period of economic growth, high optimism and a fertile period for prospective research, which appeared to indicate this growth would continue (Masini, 2000, p.1, Bell, 2003). That assumption was brought into question by Meadows et al in 'The Limits to Growth', a scenario analysis of twelve possible futures for the planet from 1972- 2100, commissioned by the Club of Rome. Randers, one of its authors, concluded that 'delays in global decision making would cause the human economy to overshoot planetary limits before the growth in the human ecological footprint slowed' (Randers, 2012, p.102). For Slaughter, much of the formative work of futures studies conducted in the 1960s and 70s was an expression of industrial era modernism, Western style, to conquer nature, remove limits, promote economic growth and support the expansion of science and technology into ever wider domains (Slaughter, 2002, p.229). This, combined with the energy and economic crisis of the 1970s created disillusionment, resulting in the enthusiasm and optimism of the futures

thinkers of the 1960s and 70s losing some of its impetus in the 1980s (Masini, 2002, p.150). For Goux-Baudiment, the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, was a decisive moment in history; characterised by a questioning of authority, it marked the transition to a new era, from which the bottom up approach became widespread: each actor was able to participate in the construction of his future and contribute to the process of decision making (Goux-Baudiment, 2001, p.25).

Recourse to a specifically *Territorial* prospective began with the decentralisation of power in France in the early 1980s ²⁷. Territorial planning was now a local concern; compelling regions to restructure responsibilities and transforming how specifically local actors were able to think about the future. External factors also contributed to the case for a specifically territorial prospective, notably the complexity and uncertainty of questions that concerned the future of territories, these included the influence of globalisation and the place of France within a rapidly changing Europe. This created a paradigm shift within the French regional planning policies (Aménagement du Territoire) as the state no longer sought to balance Paris with provincial towns and cities, due to European integration and the internationalization process. Rather, the State prefers to consider it as an international urban area, competing with other cities, notably ‘global cities’, and as such requiring aid (Lefèvre, 2004, p.74). This paradigm shift is at the heart of the second decentralization step, which marks the end of the ‘jardin à la française’, a Napoleonic, political and cartesian model (Ibid). Recognition of these factors coupled with the emergence of global cities (cf.Sassen, 1996) created a double challenge for the French State. It called for the reinforcement of the position of Paris in response to this phenomenon, while ‘comforting’ the position of other French cities that might access the ranks of ‘European cities’ (Lacour and Delmarre, 2008, p.91).

²⁷ Loi n°82-213 du 2 mars 1982 relative aux droits et libertés des communes, des départements et des régions (relative to the right to freedom of the communes, the departments and the regions)

Loi n°82-653 du 29 juillet 1982 portant réforme de la planification (reforming planning)

Loi n°83-8 du 7 janvier 1983 relative à la répartition de compétences entre les communes, les départements, les régions et l'Etat *loi Defferre* (relative to the sharing of competencies between the communes, the regions and the state *law Defferred*)

Loi n°83-663 du 22 juillet 1983 complétant la loi n° 83-8 du 7 janvier 1983 relative à la répartition de compétences entre les communes, les départements, les régions et l'Etat (1) (completing law n° 83-8, relative to the sharing of competencies between communes, departments, regions and state).

Future thinking in the NPC began with the OREAM²⁸ du Nord exercise of 1971, a technocratic centralized prospective study, determined by the era in which it took place: pre-oil crisis, yet in the midst of a difficult social crisis which gripped the region during the death throes of heavy industry. Under the V plan (1966-1970), the French state recognized the need to counterbalance an ever expanding Parisian agglomeration with provincial towns. In response, it created eight ‘métropoles d’équilibre’, supported by housing, educational and public transport facilities (Dormand, 2001, p.87). In total, ten OREAM were implemented, including the OREAM du nord exercise of 1971, under the tutelage of the Minister d’équipement and DATAR²⁹. In this manner, Prospective offers a window into governmentality at particular moments in history. Here, ten years before decentralisation, the OREAM was a document of its time; specifically a centralized technocratic top down exercise,

In a very different context because we are evidently before decentralization, before the public regional establishments and we are in a territory where the state thinks and the state decides, the state pays, so the state does everything (Interview, Mr. Philippe Bouchez, Chef de Service Prospective et Plannification Regionale, Direction du Développement Durable de la Prospective et de l’Evaluation, Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais, 16th June 2010, my translation).

The OREAM du nord is notable for the performative force of its discourse, by shaping what is imagined as a future possible, the arrival of the TGV and the rapid emergence of the service sector, recognizable today in the form of Euralille.

Thirty years later, the prospective approach deployed in the SRADT³⁰ of the NPC, discussed later in this chapter, aspired to exceed the normative and technocratic approaches of the ‘building works proposal’³¹ that defined the OREAM du nord³². In 1982-1983, the Defferre laws devolved decision making and management powers to elected local and regional bodies. The aim of decentralization was to ‘foster the emergence of local democracy’ by bringing policy making closer to citizens (French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, p.1). As such local mayors were now responsible

²⁸ OREAM Organisation d’études d’aménagement des aires métropolitaines - Organization of planning studies of metropolitan areas

²⁹ DATAR - Délégation à l’aménagement du territoire et à l’action régionale – Delegation for land planning and regional action

³⁰ SRADT –Schéma Regional d’Aménagement et de Développement du Territoire- A regional Scheme for Planning and Development of the Territory.

³¹ Building works proposal - The Métropoles d’équilibre were to be supported by housing, educational and public transport facilities (Dormand, 2001, p.87).

³² Région Nord Pas de Calais Conseil Regional, Direction Générale SRADT, Powerpoint Presentation, 2002, p.9, my translation

for a budget for their territory and required direction in how best to use it. In this context, Territorial prospective is useful to locally elected representatives;

the most appropriate approach for the diagnosis and structural dynamics of the situation of a territory, often poorly understood by elected members themselves. It provides an overview of current developments, and the future global context. It is a tool for thinking collectively about the major regional issues and prioritizing them; to draw desirable responses to these issues. In other words territorial prospective helps actors to answer questions, "where are we going? Where do we want to go? How do we get there? "It thus appears inextricably linked to the implementation and progress of decentralization (de Courson and Goux-Baudiment, cited in Goux-Baudiment, Soulet and de Courson, 2008, p.15).

Thus decentralization has enabled a different perspective of future events, as expressed in one of the guiding principles of the SRADT, it gives precedence to the identification of the 'social demand', rather than the technocratic building works proposal of the OREAM, through a process of public debate, to meet the demands of both the Regional Executive and the expectations of civil society (Lorens, 2004, p.206).

Despite the upheaval, decentralization has put local authorities 'back in the saddle' (Lefèvre, 1998, p.18). It deliberately opposed the quintessentially French conception of a paternalistic and omnipresent state (Alvergne and Musso, 2003, p.306). For Peck, state restructuring processes are above all political phenomena and as such they should be understood as part of a wider and deeper and even hegemonic process of neoliberalization (2001, p.447). It is concerned with the downloading and outsourcing of responsibility, as expressed in the introduction of three laws on the eve of the new millennium, which sought to radically change relations between central and local government (Ampe, 2002, p.21). Collectively, these laws aimed to recompose the institutional landscape in France, at present the most fragmented in Europe and define new scales of land division, contesting the 'old order' inherited from the French revolution with its 36,000 townships and 95 departments (Frébault, 2002, p.44).

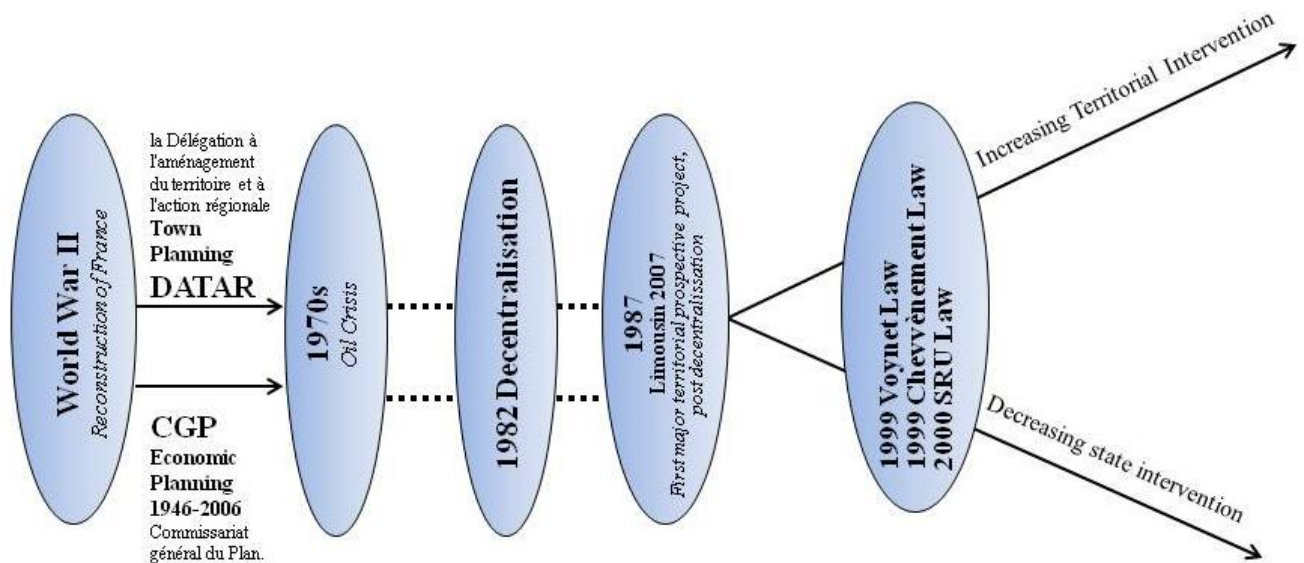


Figure 4.1: Defining moments in the trajectory of future thinking
Source: Goux-Baudiment, 2012.

Figure 4.1 above illustrates the sequence of events which triggered the emergence of territorial prospective. The first, introduced on the 25th June 1999, the Voynet Law³³, to update the existing Pasqua Law (LOADT). While the Pasqua Law was concerned with the planning and development of territories, the Voynet Law is symbolically concerned with the future. It calls for a more participative style of democracy, at local level, through the creation of ‘Development Councils’ to facilitate partnerships between the economic, social, cultural and voluntary sectors in all French ‘agglomerations’³⁴. These development councils also enable civic society to become a partner of the political authorities (Frébault, 2002, p.48). Completing existing texts on decentralisation, urbanism and environmental law it empowered French regions to develop a SRADT, which compels specifically local actors to engage in future thought.

The SRADT fixes the fundamental directions, of the sustainable development of the regional territory, in the medium term. It includes a document of prospective analysis and a regional charter, together with cartographic documents, which express the project for

³³ Pasqua Law or LOADT - La Loi d’Orientation pour L’Aménagement et le Développement du Territoire (The law Directing Planning and Development of the Territory). Loi Voynet n° 99-533 du 25 juin 1999 : LOADDT - La Loi d’Orientation pour L’Aménagement et le Développement *Durable* du Territoire (The law Directing Planning and *Sustainable* Development of the Territory).

³⁴ ‘Agglomeration’ as defined by INSEE (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economique- the French national agency for statistics) is considered as an ‘unité urbaine’- ‘urban unit, such as a collection of communities, presenting a continuation of urban fabric (no more than 200m between buildings) and counting at least 2000 inhabitants. The condition is that each community of the urban unit possesses more than half of its population in this built zone. These urban units are redefined at the occasion of each population census. They may be spread over several departments’.

the planning and sustainable development of the regional territory (Extract of Article 34, modified by Article 5 of Law n°99-533 of June 25, 1999, www.Legifrance.gouv.fr, my translation).

In a region synonymous with pronounced socio-economic problems, territorial prospective offered hope of a better tomorrow and provided the impetus to achieve it. Although the Voynet law is the primary tool that enables prospective to embed itself in planning process and practice, the inherent strength of this law, is that it does not say, *how* to do so,

Mme. Voynet, of the Voynet law, required that the ‘communautés urbaines’ like the ‘communautés d’agglomération’ acquire a development council. In a very intelligent and surprising manner for France, she did not say how this should be composed. Normally we say “it’s like that”, from the first to the last line, without thinking that the practices from Brittany to Flanders to Bordeaux are not the same. She had the intelligence to say, we need a council, here are their objectives. She did not say how it should be composed, or how they should work, which left everyone open to the possibility of finding their own way of working (Interview, Mr. Bertrand Delbecq, formerly of the University of Lille 1, the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences and Municipal councilor - Tourcoing until 2008, 6th June 2008, my translation).

In swift succession, the loi Chevènement ³⁵ followed in July 1999, to promote the ‘reinforcement and simplification of inter-communal cooperation’³⁶. This law provides for three types of groupings: municipal communities, metropolitan areas and urban communities³⁷ (Frébault, 2002, p.44). Finally, on the 13th December 2000, the loi Solidarité et Renouvellement Urbains (SRU – the solidarity and urban renewal act), which aims to make planning documents strategic as opposed to regulatory (Frébault, 2002, p.45). The impact of these laws extends beyond facilitating the emergence of territorial prospective; specifically they are instrumental in accelerating a shift in power from the level of the state to increasing intervention at territorial level (Figure 4.1). The refusal to prescribe how to enact the Voynet law provides the local authorities with a degree of autonomy when constructing the partnerships that compose the ‘development councils’, involved in the construction of the made to measure ‘Charte’ or territorial project. Through the collective contribution to projects, territorial prospective participates in the modernization of public action, a new

³⁵ Loi Chevènement : Loi n°99-586 du 12 juillet 1999 relative au renforcement et à la simplification de la coopération intercommunale (The law relative to the strengthening and simplification of intercommunal cooperation). ‘Commune’ as defined by INSEE (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economique- the French national agency for statistics) is the smallest French administrative subdivision, it is also the oldest, because it succeeded the towns and Parishes of the middle ages.

³⁶ www.legifrance.gouv.fr - my translation

³⁷ Defined by the number of inhabitants – 50 000 or more for metropolitan areas and 500 000 or more for urban communities (Frébault, 2002, p.44)

functioning of territorial organisation and a new governance (Delamarre and Malhomme, 2002, p.18).

4.1.1 The context of the emergence of future thinking in the Glasgow City Region

In contrast to the rich history of future thinking in France, future thinking in the UK is a more recent activity. A 1993 White Paper indicated the government would launch a Technology Foresight Programme³⁸. From this emerged a future thinking capacity - *Foresight*³⁹ – which exists at UK government level within the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills of the Government Office for Science, reporting directly to the Government Chief Scientific Adviser and the Cabinet Office⁴⁰. Their remit is to help the government think systemically about the future. In 1999, Foresight extended its remit from a focus on technology to the examination of the interactions between innovations in science and technology and the wider social and market trends. In 2010 they published a report on Land Use Futures (Ibid). Foresight shares with la Prospective the notion of the existence of possible alternative futures. It explores the alternatives for development that are open in the present, followed by an analysis of the future outcomes of different paths of development (Martin, 2010, p.1441).

Devolution has been the catalyst for future thinking in Scotland. This began with the ‘Scenarios for Scotland, a Journey to 2015’, a study originated by St. Andrews University Management Institute (SAMI),⁴¹ following the referendum for devolution in 1997, to create two or three devolution scenarios for a devolved Scotland (SAMI,

³⁸ Realising Our Potential – A Strategy for Science Engineering and Technology.

³⁹ The term foresight was coined by Irvine and Martin who conducted studies on technological foresight and innovation at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) of Sussex University in the early 1980s. They favoured the term foresight to distinguish the difference in approach with ‘technology forecasting’, which presumes the existence of only *one* probable future, linking the past and the present in a linear and deterministic manner.

⁴⁰ Bis Department for Business Innovation and Skills – Foresight.
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/foresight> (Accessed June 20th 2012).

⁴¹ Conducted by researchers from the Universities of St. Andrews and Strathclyde supported by SAMI 1997-1999, sponsored by a consortium: composed of Scottish Enterprise, Aegon UK, Amerada-Hess, BT Scotland, Bank of Scotland, ICL, Scottish Council Foundation, Scottish Homes, Shell UK, SwissRe Life and Health.

1999, p.3). Two scenarios were produced: the ‘High Road’, a normative scenario, representing the best future for Scotland and the ‘Low Road’ a disappointing picture of a future Scotland (Ibid, p.5-6). These scenarios were subsequently taken into the Scottish political arena by SAMI. Figure 4.2 below illustrates the sequence of events that have contributed to the development of future thinking in Scotland.

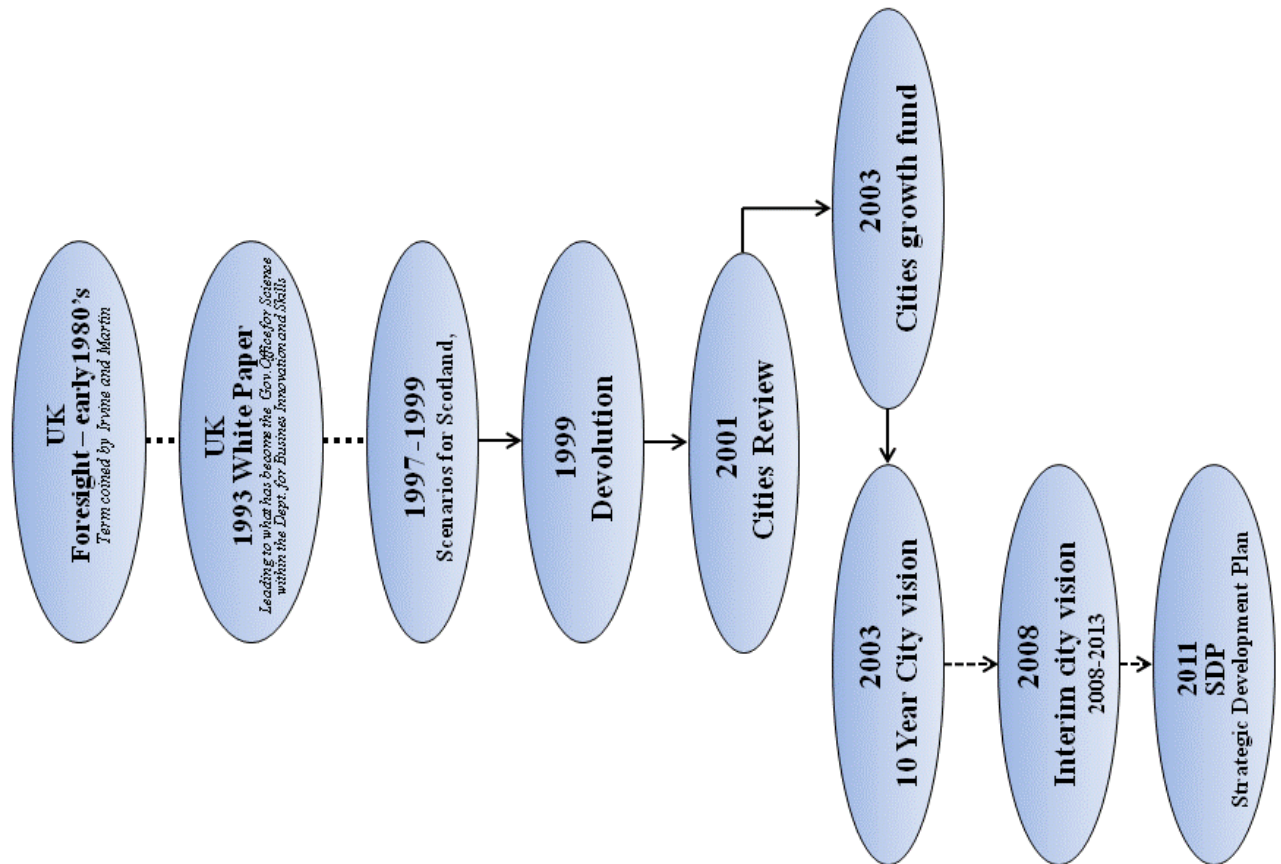


Figure 4.2 Defining moments in the trajectory of future thinking in Scotland
Source: Author

Post devolution, a Foresight capacity also exists within the Scottish Government’s Strategy unit, concerned with the broad issues that inform policy shaping at government level.

We took the decision that following devolution we did horizon scanning work. We are really taking particular topics informally. Three years ago we started doing this in a more structured fashion; this is the trend across government in general in Whitehall. We are a small country so we can get further ahead more quickly.

It is about context setting, trend analysis, what can influence, feeding down (Interview Dr. Alexandra Stein, The Scottish Government’s Strategy Unit, 6th February 2008).

I am unable to comment further on the contribution of this unit to futures thinking in Scotland, having obtained little or no information on their approach while in the field. Yet, this might be considered indicative of the importance given to future thought by the Scottish government, having appointed a small team to examine the broad scope of questions that futures thought engages with, demonstrates the lack of institutional support for futures. As such, it resonates with my findings that future thought is currently on the margins as opposed to central to decision making.

A 'Futures Forum' was created by the Scottish Parliament in 2005, to enable its Members, along with policy makers, businesses, academics, and the wider community of Scotland, to look beyond the four year electoral cycle and stimulate public debate on how to prepare for the future now⁴². In contrast to the entirely State funded prospective approach embedded at national level in France, the Scottish 'Futures Forum' relies on a co-production funding model;

It's a body set up with support from parliament, financed by industry and other areas. It has a board of directors, who give us a steer in areas we should be looking at. The Chair is the presiding officer and we have a broad representation of stakeholders (Interview, Donald Jarvie, Head of Business, Finance and Events at the Scottish Parliament Futures Forum, 3rd September 2008).

The structure of this financial model raises concerns about the potential content of any futures exercise which might be compromised by the interests of particular stakeholders. Does the notion of co-production imply this model could potentially steer future thinking in a direction other than that desired by parliament?

Yes, but spending too much government money in a direction that is not obvious is difficult. Private investment may have a vested interest, so that is why we have gone for a combination of that (public and private). We choose not to take large sums of money from one big financial institution; we have a broad spread of smaller funders to maintain impartiality (Ibid).

While some of the futures questions investigated by this forum may be of interest to planning concerns, these studies are distinct from the Glasgow City region vision investigated in this thesis. Nevertheless, the structure of the futures forum raises questions about the practice of future thinking in general in Scotland, which warrants further investigation. Although the forum 'operates a co production funding model', which aspires to more than a financial model, is this really possible? Further investigation is required to establish if these futures are representative of the views of

⁴² Scotland's Future Forum, Scottish Parliament, 'About Scotland's Future Forum' <http://www.scotlandfutureforum.org/index.php?id=55> (Accessed 25th June 2012)

the ‘wider community in Scotland’ as per the forum’s claims on its website, or if dominant business interests shape the agenda.

Post devolution, the Scottish government views the planning system as an essential instrument to achieve its central purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth and to supporting the Scottish Government’s five strategic objectives and fifteen national outcomes⁴³ (Scottish Government, 2010, p.1). The National Planning Framework provides direction for the future spatial development of Scotland, it is subject to factors driving change which are beyond the control of the Scottish government and its agencies (Scottish Executive, 2004, p.85). These include Scotland’s position in the changing geography of Europe and globalisation (Ibid, p.85-86).

The recognition that ‘Scotland’s future is bound up with the future of its cities’ led to the ‘Review of Scotland’s Cities’ in 2001 (Scottish Executive, 2003, p.5). This was an exercise with a wide ranging remit to consider the economic, environmental and social developmental prospects of Scotland’s five ⁴⁴cities and to identify Executive policies to improve them, while acknowledging the interactions between these cities and their surrounding areas (Ibid).

The aim of the review was to look at cities as places, to consider the cumulative impacts of policies, both their intended and unintended consequences. To look at how local authorities, the Scottish Executive, public agencies, local communities and the business sector work together to establish a future vision for the cities collectively and individually, translate that vision into an operational strategy and then deliver that strategy. To audit how effective Scotland is at managing strategic change at the city level (Scottish Executive, 2003, p.5).

Those involved in the cities Review believed ‘that a strong, widely supported and understood ‘vision’ for the future is a pre-requisite for a successful city’. A belief supported by the ‘success stories’ of the 1990s, which included Barcelona, Sydney and notably *Lille*, as places holding a strong vision of what they wanted to achieve and importantly, the ability to move from vision to reality (Scottish Executive, 2002, p.206). In response to this review a Cities Growth Fund was established in 2003, whereby cities were allocated funds in proportion to its population (Scottish Executive, 2007, p.2). The Cities Review led to the production of a Scottish Executive

⁴³ The Scottish Government, ‘Strategic Objectives’
www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms (Accessed 1st July 2012)

⁴⁴ Scotland now has seven cities; Stirling was awarded city status in 2002 and Perth in 2012.

policy statement ‘Building Better Cities’, which called for a move from ‘analysis to action’ by proposing the development of ten year strategic city-region agreements – the City-Vision, to be financed by the Cities Growth Fund. These visions were effectively a means of accessing a ‘ring-fenced source of funding for (primarily) physical regeneration activity’⁴⁵.

A cities growth fund was established...to download that money you needed to have a city regions strategy and of course every city region went and created one, including Glasgow, which is really a compendium of existing strategies force fed into a city region context, here’s a strategy that was called Metropolitan Glasgow. However it wasn’t really future informed in any way, it was just as I say a scramble around to pull down money (Interview, Kevin Kane, Director, Policy Development, Scottish Enterprise, 9th January 2008).

A short time frame of just four months was provided for the cities to prepare a vision to qualify for funding. This points to one of the macro features of neoliberalized policy environments, which, Peck claims, is the accelerating turnover time of policies themselves (2001, p.452). Building on the existing Glasgow and Clyde Valley joint structure plan⁴⁶, the vision for the Glasgow Metropolitan City Region (2003-2013) was conceived by the Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership, in consultation with the eight local authorities it covers.

Our Vision is clear. We want the Glasgow City Region to be one of the most dynamic, economically competitive and socially cohesive regions within Europe

This ten year vision has been updated by an interim Glasgow City Region vision (2008- 2013), which provides an agreed political context for the vision (GCVSDPA, 2009, p.9). The joint committee continued futures work on ‘spatial stories’ which informed the new strategic development plan⁴⁷ which was published in 2011. The futures group is currently in abeyance, although horizon scanning is an ongoing process within the GCVSDPA.

Finally, the utility of futures thinking in both case study contexts is to enable planners to widen their outlook and see beyond the constraints of the dominant discourses of economic growth and risk aversion, which have a performative force of their own, a

⁴⁵ Glasgow City Council, ‘Metropolitan Vision - our vision for the Glasgow City Region 2008-2013’ http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/Business/Businesssupport/Research_statistics/metropolitanvision.htm (Accessed 20th June 2012)

⁴⁶ Glasgow, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, West Dunbartonshire, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire

⁴⁷ The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan replaced the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan, capturing the same geographic area and local authorities concerned.

concept that I will explore in the next chapter. In the introduction to this thesis, I stated that policy scientists aspired to ‘de-futurise’ the future by removing uncertainty and providing security, in other words - they are risk averse - whereas, futurists aspire to open up and explore the uncertainty of an unknown horizon (Bell, 2003, p. 56). Future thinking transcends the limitations of quantitative techniques traditionally deployed in planning, which relied on extrapolating existing trends and presented an incomplete picture of the future. Future thinking is creative thinking, it is utopian in nature. While Pinder observed that critics attributed the failure in current utopian writing to the ‘struggle to imagine’ (2007, p.8), I disagree with this assertion. Future thought is *all* about imagining alternative futures; as discussed earlier, it occupies the space between the two opposing poles of *eutopia* and *dystopia*. It provides the ‘point of intervention’ as envisaged by Levitas, which enables utopian thought to re-enter debates on city futures (1993, p.257). I have argued this in-between space where future thought can be critically appraised resembles the counter sites or *heterotopias* as Foucault imagined. The real ‘struggle’ begins at the moment when the results of these debates or ‘future possibles’ have to be translated into policy and planning documents, as the NPC example discussed above demonstrated. I will now consider what other challenges influence the futures narrative when it leaves the utopic space of the futures exercise.

4.2 Lost in Translation

I believe that through all sorts of convulsions and contradictions, we shall see the emergence of new ideas, especially in urbanistic thinking, which seems to me to be a field of creation and exploration. Besides, the urban as a concept designates a reality in crisis. Because, if there is a crisis of representation, we should not forget that it is also that which is represented which is in crisis, in transformation, changing. What will be the city of tomorrow (Lefebvre, 1996, p.212)?

In this section I aim to discuss how futures narratives become diluted when they migrate from the space of the futures exercise to the messy world of policy and state strategies. I do so in two ways: Firstly by briefly outlining the respective future thinking processes that were deployed in a planning context in each country, which I will illustrate, are deployed in fundamentally different ways. Then I consider the ways in which futures thinking has to adapt as soon as it leaves the intellectual space of a futures exercise, by examining how it gets contorted by the various realities of context, finance, politics, policy tourism – neoliberalism and the migration of policy.

4.2.1 The Nord Pas de Calais Region experience

In conformity with the Voynet law, the SRADT includes a prospective component, which diverges from the technical forecasts commonly conducted for the purposes of planning, which extrapolate existing trends and focus on what *will be*. Territorial prospective will *never* make any pronouncements on what will be. It postulates that if a particular event happens in a given context, then a particular outcome *might* be expected. Forecasts take little account of the complex interactions within and between domains, whereas, Prospective is global,

or at least intersectoral, and general. It handles quantitative, but also the qualitative - trends, values, behaviors, changes ... it integrates possible breaks, which are by definition random. It deals with the journey - the successive steps and the critical path - and seeks less to 'predict' than to understand the changes, the possible or desirable alternatives. Above all, it remains open, imaginative and democratic. It creates debate (de Courson, Soulet, Goux-Baudiment, 2008, p.22-23).

Territorial prospective relies on two principal forms of prospective: *normative* prospective and *participatory* prospective (Goux-Baudiment, cited in Goux-Baudiment, F, Soulet, G and de Courson, J, 2008, p.18). The former is concerned with the construction of a 'common vision for the future' by local actors (see Appendices). In the context of this study, this is laid out in the 'chart' of the SRADT, with a horizon of ten years. The latter is more concerned with the 'process' of future thinking than the result. Here the goal is to 'set in motion' the territory through consultation, public debate, collective intelligence etc (Ibid). Participatory prospective became popular in the 1990s, after the fall of the Berlin wall, which opened the way for the notion of governance (de Courson et al, 2008, p.14). Both these forms were deployed in the territorial prospective exercise of the SRADT of the NPC. This approach involved six hundred people, including representatives from the public authorities and civil society. The participants in these groups were selected by the regional council which aspired to open this participatory approach to a wide audience. Eight working groups were created as listed below, with the mission of examining the transversal problematic, rather than thematic and sectoral (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.11, my translation):

- Europe
- Environment and resources
- Economy and development
- Lifestyle, individual and society

- Urban region
- Institution, not for profit organisations, participation
- Mobility of people
- Movement of merchandise (freight) (Ibid).

While this process was logistically resource intensive, both financially and in terms of the three year timeframe required to open out and examine in-depth the question of the future possibilities confronting the region, it was also useful in terms of being able to enrol support and embed itself in the planning process,

We could say that we really took off in Prospective with the commission for 2020. In the framework of our preparation for 2020, it structured and gave us the means and visibility to organise solid partnerships around this approach (interview, Lorens, Director of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 24th April 2008, my translation).

We did not decide this, all of that, we constructed it while walking, we tried this, it failed, we tried something else, it worked! It was a living approach, not encircled by gurus who propose methods etc. We have really constructed the approach I showed you, which appears very organised, but we did it bit by bit (Ibid).

A prerequisite to any Prospective exercise is a rigorous *retrospective* analysis, informed by a ‘socle’ (base) which included comparative studies, diagnosis and analysis. This information is largely situated knowledge, composed by the SRADT team, using internal regional council resources, documentation that is pertinent to ‘territorial engineering’ and studies provided by academics, consultants and design offices⁴⁸.

The SRADT was composed in two stages: A prospective stage, taking a long term view of twenty years, to identify the trends, ruptures and emerging phenomenon confronting the region. It is the influence of these trends that is of interest to the future of the region – specifically which trends are to be pursued or indeed require balancing. The SRADT identified large urban trends, including metropolitization, which carried the risk of increasing divergences with the territories of the NPC and the metropole (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.23). The trend scenario for the NPC points towards an auto-centring metropolitan Lille, progressively turned towards, Paris, Brussels. A ‘region in pieces’ is emerging, composed of an increasingly more independent metropolitan Lille surrounded by

⁴⁸ Goux-Baudiment (2001) Powerpoint presentation - architectures SRADT, footnote, p.2.

competing territories. The SRADT aspires to improve the competitiveness of the NPC with the Northwest of Europe, represented in the scenario for a ‘desirable future’, of ‘shared metropolitisation’ where the composite parts of the region participate to increase regional potential (Jonas and Lapierre, 2002, p.58). The role of Lille Métropole is pivotal in the territorial dynamics of the Nord Pas de Calais, yet ‘metropolitisation’ risks exacerbating the already uneven economic geography of the region by creating a gulf between its composite parts, or territories, and the Métropole. To counteract this risk, ‘cohesion’ between the regional territories is identified as a key stake in the SRADT, not only within the region, but also in the wider context of globalization and competition with neighboring regions, notably the close proximity with ‘‘mega-attractors’: Parisian basin, Brussels, Randstad’ (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.22). Identified as an opportunity for renewed governance, the territories will be the ‘‘building block’’ of a governance which ensures better cohesion’ (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.22). The SRADT reinforces cohesion through the promotion of local development and new relationships between public and private services, in the continuing spirit of decentralization and territorial cohesion,

The economic and territorial dynamics are supported more and more by networks, co-operations, partnerships between multiple actors (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.23, my translation).

The creation of ‘productive systems’ or networks by actors from the public, social and economic sector who are then able to construct projects and exchange experiences, is fast becoming a ‘major territorial asset’ (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.23).

The second stage of the SRADT was concerned with the construction of the *charte régionale d’aménagement et de développement* (regional chart for planning and development) by the working groups, with a ten year horizon, to identify the stakes, priorities and objectives to be implemented (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.1). Six stakes were identified:

- Invest in the knowledge society and communication
- Open up to Europe and the world
- Make a difference by building and enhancing our uniqueness
- Overcome disparities
- Reclaim the environment and improve living conditions

- Mobilize the regional society and strengthen citizenship
(Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.12, my translation)

While the Glasgow City Region process methodology drew largely on scenario planning, the NPC prospective exercise does not. Instead these working groups relied on rigorous debate within the working groups, including ‘cross pollination’ of competencies between them,

Rule: diversity of the participants also, for example, we encouraged economists not to register only with the economy and development group, but also register with another group. Environmental specialists also went into the economy group or the group linked to life style and society so really a diversity, to have a fresh/different perspective (in the working group (Interview, Mr. Philippe Bouchez, Chef de Service Prospective et Plannification Regionale, Direction du Développement Durable de la Prospective et de l’Evaluation, Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais, 16th June 2010, my translation).

This fits with the ideologies of future thinking, it aspires to construct a *collective intelligence*. For Stevens, who undertook early Prospective work in the Nord-pas de Calais, governance may be understood as a practice of local democracy (2000, p.62). He claimed the definition given to governance is determined by the conception of *collective action*, defined as having not only common objectives and domains of action, but also the establishment of relations between actors and particularly respect for those actors. It then supposes a collective production of knowledge or *collective intelligence* through the exchange and mastery of ‘information’. This practice has a goal - the construction of chains of action and sharing of responsibilities (Stevens, 2000, p.63). However, while collective intelligence contributes significantly to the process of decision making oriented towards action, it does not seek to provide a response, rather to enlighten public decision making. Perhaps its greatest strength is the ability to raise good questions of experts (Goux-Baudiment, 1994, p.391-392). It breaks with the singular technocratic visions of development which prevailed before decentralization, because no actor or institution alone can claim to have all the answers, hence *collective intelligence*.

Yet capturing public opinion alone does *not* constitute collective intelligence. For Goux-Baudiment, collective intelligence is a ‘process’. It emerges through the construction of an object on which it ‘exercises its faculty of intelligence’ (2001, p.33). Here, the object in question is the project for the regional territory of the Nord-Pas-de Calais, a future vision (SRADT), as required by the Voynet law. A process that is not linear in the strict sense of the word. It is more a back and forth process,

that is slowly constructed, supported by the necessary means to achieve it. Thus, collective intelligence is the way in which prospective enrolls support through the participation of local actors and citizens and becomes embedded in the planning process.

While the prospective process aspired to a participative approach, in reality mostly institutional actors were involved in this process, yet this succeeded in creating a network of regional actors or ‘epistemic community’ (Lorens, 2004, p.209), in the sense that they are collectively constructing a common knowledge based goal. According to Lorens, this is the ‘sharing of a common vision of the regional future, which transcends the positions occupied and interests that underlie these positions’ (2004, p.209). Although the role of a prospective exercise is not to contest the authority in power; rather it is to provide decision makers with the necessary information to shape policy, it is worthy of note, the ‘light and sound’ on the SRADT was interrupted until after the regional elections in 2004. Ultimately the power to approve or veto a future vision lies with the politicians.

Regularly evaluated and updated by the Regional Council, as part of an ongoing process of territorial, institutional and partnership management by the region, the SRADT is also the strategic framework that applies to various regional schemes (transport, etc.) (Region Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Regional, 2007, p.2). The *SRADT permanent* is concerned with the implementation of the SRADT and the continuation of future thinking, supported by a regional college of prospective, which was launched in 2008, two years after the completion of the SRADT. Composed of six groups, or *fabriques* ⁴⁹ each linked to the six stakes of the SRADT, with a future horizon extending to 2030 / 2040, and for specifically environmental questions, 2050. This process is summarised in Figure 4.3 below.

⁴⁹ *Fabriques*: The working groups of the SRADT, now part of the SRADT permanent. *Fabriques* derives from the French verb *fabriquer*, it has manufacturing connotations. Goux-Baudiment, who facilitated the process in the NPC region advised against the use of this term precisely because it is anchored in the past.

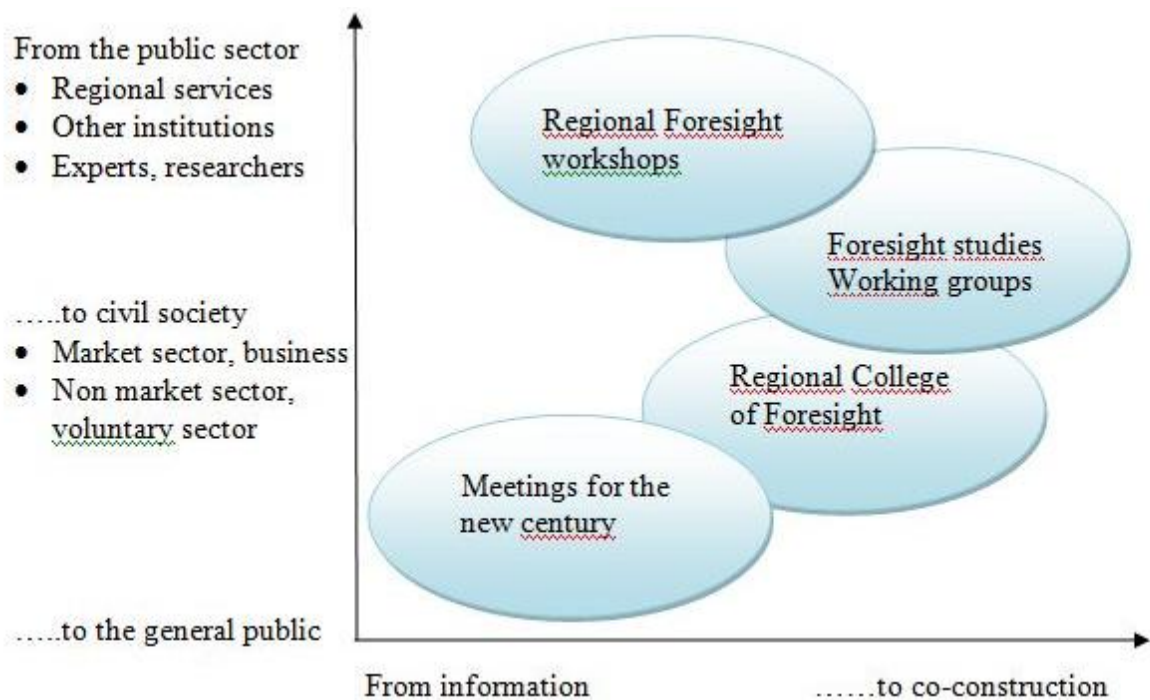


Figure 4.3: The Regional Council Prospective approach
Source: Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais

Over the next twenty years, the SRADT aims to construct a ‘negotiated territorial system’ of regional public action, adapted to the stakes identified in the prospective exercise, thus the region expects to see a ‘gradual advent of real contractual democracy’ (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional 2007, p.42). The SRADT is translated into action at territorial level via the Contrat de plan and Contrat de Region and Charte de Pays. The Region relies on four instruments to territorialize the SRADT: the mobilization of sectoral policies for the benefit of territorial objectives; the formulation of prescriptions (or knowledge carriers) destined for the territorial operators; the support of project engineering; finally the contractual instrument (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional, 2007, p.118, my translation).

4.2.2 The Glasgow City Region experience

The Glasgow City Region exercise was initiated in response to the ‘Review of Scotland’s Cities’ project published by the devolved Scottish government in 2003, as discussed above. This project aspired to establish the role of the devolved government was to play in Scotland. Until then policy was,

either aspatial or ageographical, in that it did not have its place at all..... That’s because generally on the whole in the civil service in Scotland, the industry people don’t get Geography and the development people who are the planning people get Geography, but don’t get the industry....and that articulated the need for a greater role for cities

(Interview, Mr. Kevin Kane, Director, Policy Development, Scottish Enterprise, 9th January 2008).

The limited time frame for the production of this document of only four months precluded the contribution of a robust future thinking exercise at this point to inform the vision; consequently the existing Glasgow and Clyde Valley joint structure plan was used to inform the publication.

‘The Metropolitan Glasgow City Region’ futures project was commissioned in 2004 by the Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership (CVCPP), composed of local authorities, economic development and physical planning agencies in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley city region, and was led and resourced by Scottish Enterprise Glasgow and facilitated by Frontline Consultants. The CVCPP agreed to explore the uncertainties of taking a longer view of the development of the city region and the policy implications, through a process of scenario thinking. This exercise was used to refresh the Metropolitan city vision submitted in response to the cities review. According to Scottish Enterprise, the scenarios exercise aimed to:

- ‘Consider possible futures we may have to compete in
- Challenge our current views and planning
- Stimulate ambitious thinking about what we need to do to achieve the step change⁵⁰’ (Frontline Consultants, 2004, p.1).

Thus the central question of the Metropolitan Glasgow City Region Futures project was concerned with the success of the city of Glasgow in the next twenty to twenty five years:

In what ways can we achieve a step change in the international competitiveness of Glasgow Metropolitan City Region (Frontline Consultants, 2004, p.1)?

A scenario building exercise was conducted with selected stakeholders, including ‘exceptional individuals’, those professionally not directly concerned with this ongoing project, yet who have a valuable contribution to make at the scenario planning stage, including academics, journalists and artists. The Glasgow exercise sought to ‘influence’, not only in terms of creating and embedding a culture of future

⁵⁰ Step change` reflects the ambitions of Scottish Enterprise to promote Glasgow ‘to a higher quartile in the international cities league’, through the improvements required to move from the current trajectory to one which will realize the vision (Scottish Enterprise, 2006, p.11)

thinking in the Glasgow City region, and within the wider government structures in Scotland, but also challenging how decision makers actually think about the future.

...we revisited it, just to keep it fresh.... it didn't really change the vision, we had what we were pretty sure was a clear sustainable view of the Metropolitan area...we didn't take it as far as we would have liked, a) because of resource difficulties b) we were having a little difficulty reconciling one of the main areas of issue so it kind of dried up if that's the expression, but I think in our heart of hearts we were sure that the vision was solid from the 2000 plan, the Metropolitan Vision and therefore it was a question of keeping it fresh, that's what the later work was for, so we are still fairly clear with how we are moving it forward (Interview, Dr. Grahame Buchan, Strategic Development Plan Manager Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority 9th September 2008).

The four scenarios that were used to refresh the vision and test the city region vision strategies are represented in the scenario matrix (Figure 4.4). These scenarios were conceived around two critical uncertainties that face city region economic development planners (Frontline Consultants, 2004, p.2). The Vertical axis is concerned with the spectrum of 'competitive strategies', from sameness to diversity and the horizontal axis with 'attitudes and culture' to risk and benefits (Ibid).

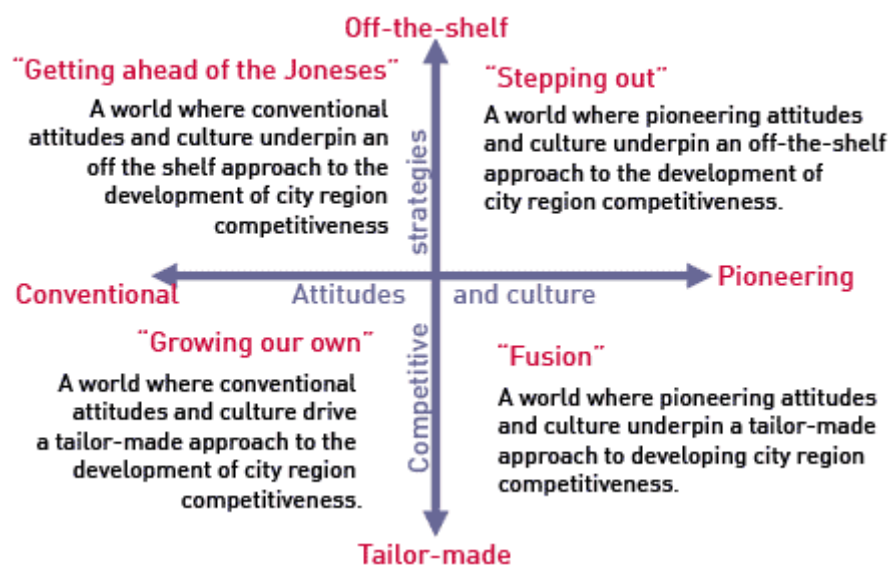


Figure 4.4 Metropolitan Glasgow City Region Futures: The Scenarios

Source: (Frontline Consultants: Metropolitan Glasgow City Region Futures, 2004, p.2)

The names of the 'worlds' described in this matrix above emerged during the futures exercise and were purposely designed to be memorable. Here the futures focus is decidedly on competitiveness; symbolically, there is no mention of social justice. Put simply, what is presented here is unadulterated neoliberal urbanism. Returning to the literature review, in which I cited Tickell and Peck's description of neoliberalisation as a process in which the boundaries of the state and market are blurred and

constantly renegotiated (Tickell and Peck, 2003)⁵¹. What is ‘lost in translation’ is a more holistic approach to an urban future, at the point of departure of this exercise; the central question of the Metropolitan futures project, which is anchored in a neoliberal discourse on competitiveness. Discourses on neoliberalism are ‘strong discourses’ due to their self-actualizing quality and alignment with the primary contours of contemporary political-economic power (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p.35). However, Turok et al warned that the current fashion for social capital does not necessarily secure social prosperity in neighbourhoods and cities, or indeed a reliance on a trickle down approach of growth for employment and a better quality of life for all (2004, p.28). In a study of Edinburgh and Glasgow, they argued, one implication for policy of the relative independence of cohesion and competitiveness; is that local and central governments must promote both (Ibid). The notion of promoting both cohesion and competitiveness is recognised in the Glasgow city region vision:

Our vision is clear. We want the Glasgow City Region to be one of the most dynamic, economically competitive and socially cohesive regions within Europe (GVCPP, 2003 and 2008, p.1).

The vision also acknowledges that ‘spatial and economic development cannot be pursued at the expense of social development’ and specifically that ‘the city region will be seriously compromised if the issues of spatial development and of social inclusion – often referred to as the opportunity gap - are not given equal weight’ (Glasgow City Council, 2008, p. 21). While the vision claims,

We set out looking for a ‘stepchange’ in regional competitiveness, *cohesion and sustainability* (CVCPP, 2008, p. 25, my emphasis).

Issues of cohesion and sustainability were visibly absent from the futures process and central question of the futures process, described above, used to inform the refreshed vision of 2008. What is also lost in translation, are two key words: *cohesion* and *sustainability*. This not only narrows the scope of this exercise, but also compromises the city region by failing to give equal weight to the ‘opportunity gap’ that the vision refers to. Furthermore, research by Moore and Begg, on urban growth and competitiveness in Britain, revealed that the changing roles of cities, as reflected in

⁵¹ GaWC Research Bulletin 102 (2003) <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/rb/rb102.html>

This Research Bulletin has been published in Peck, J and Yeung, H (eds) (2003) *Remaking the Global Economy: Economic-Geographical Perspectives* London: Sage, pp. 163-181.

their changing industrial structures over the last fifty years, coupled with their response to differential patterns of growth and decline, suggests the urban system is adjusting to market forces (2004, p.107). Symbolically, they observed little evidence of cities reversing their fortunes, or significantly changing their position in the urban hierarchy of economic performance, despite the adjustments of the system to market forces, the long run stability of city rankings is maintained (Ibid). Moore and Begg conclude that the sources of urban competitive advantage and disadvantage are deep-seated, not easily dislodged and that the long standing market adjustments and policies, thus far, have failed to resolve many of the problems cities face (Ibid). These findings call into question the validity of 'step change' as the corner stone of the central question of the Glasgow Metropolitan futures project.

What is significant in the Glasgow futures exercise is the emphasis on competitiveness. The question of competitiveness is explored by Parrad (2005) in a study of the customs and practices of futures processes in European cities. Parrad observed that in a climate where competition between places is growing, European cities are compelled to promote their advantages and insert themselves in a movement of metropolitisation (2005, p.103). Here, prospective is a useful tool which enables urban actors to engage with these stakes, yet the images these exercises project of peaceful and prosperous cities, are eerily similar from one territory to another (Parrad, 2005, p.116). By focusing on competitiveness, she argued, they risk overlooking the more concrete impacts of prospective exercises: the articulation of the various existing initiatives at city level in a common project, networking, mobilization processes and learning. Thus for her, metropolitisation is an issue for prospective, it is an opportunity to assert its specific methods, facilitating project management. Gradually, a city specific prospective could be identified, allowing them to enroll in the international 'cities game' and take advantage of their specificities (Ibid).

Under new legislation, approved since the scenario exercise, the Clyde Valley Structure Plan is replaced by the new Strategic Development Plan. Glasgow is one of four strategic development plan (SDP) areas in Scotland, conceived to capture the largest city-regions, which are required under the Act to include:

A vision statement - a broad statement showing how the development of the area could occur and the issues that might be expected to affect that development, including

physical, economic, social and physical characteristics, principal land use, the size, composition and distribution of the population of the area, the infrastructure, how the infrastructure is used and any anticipated changes (Report by the four SDPAs with the assistance of the Scottish Government, 2009, p.4).

Building on the consensus of the Metropolitan futures project, in 2009, the joint committee engaged in further future work, with a futures group, intended to inform the strategic development plan, 'a consideration of how future change drivers would impact on the city-region through to 2035' (GCVSDPA, 2012, p.12). The Futures group deployed two main techniques, horizon scanning and spatial stories (scenario planning). Four stories were composed from which a preferred future was chosen to enable the key steps/ policy decisions required to achieve that desired future (Ibid, p.7). The Strategic development plan was published in July 2012 and will be monitored annually and reviewed every five years (Report by the four SDPAs with the assistance of the Scottish Government, 2009, p.7). In the interim period, the futures group is currently in abeyance, although horizon scanning is an ongoing process within the GCVSDPA.

4.3 The Migration of Ideas: From the space of the futures exercise to the messy world of policy and state strategies.

When future thinking migrates from the intellectual space of the futures exercise, to the messy world of policy and state strategies, it is confronted with the pragmatic exercise of decision making, it gets contorted by the various realities of politics; finance; context; policy tourism – neoliberalism and the migration of policy. In both case study settings this challenge is immediate, as neither has the statutory authority to implement the possible futures that have been envisaged. It points towards what Peck and Tickell call the 'politics of neoliberalism', whereby local institutions and actors are given responsibility without power, while international institutions are gaining power without responsibility (2002, p.39). So how do the authorities engage with the many challenges this presents? The cockpit of futures activity in the Nord-Pas de Calais region is located in the 'Sustainable Development, Foresight and Evaluation' Unit of the Regional Council. Instigated by Mr. Pierre Jean Lorens in 1994 and building on earlier work undertaken by an academic and later Regional Council employee, Jean-François Stevens, it currently has thirty five personnel and an

annual budget of 1.5 Million Euros⁵². The regional council play an important role in the prospective exercise, that of *Chef de file* or leader, in the field of territorial planning, as described in the decentralization laws (Region Nord Pas de Calais, 2007, p.1). While legally responsible for the development of the SRADT, the Regional Council does *not* possess either the normative power or all the necessary competencies required to construct this project alone, hence the SRADT calls for the development of partnerships between the public sector authorities and *all* actors in the Nord Pas de Calais. Although the regional assembly of the Nord Pas de Calais adopted the SRADT on the 22nd of November 2006 - it is *not* legally binding - its purpose is to clarify decision making without being prescriptive.

The STRADT is a document that is not legally binding. It is a document of *intention*. More a strategic document developed by the Region - created in 1995, 1999 LOADDT, Voynet Law. The goal is to make it more coherent and confirm the 'chef du file'(leader) of the regional planning, except that it has no hierarchical power - it has no statutory power over the communes. The departments do what they want, but they have this tool that is supposed to look at utilisation, to help the region to think.... The STRADT is not just the competencies of the region. We are speaking of economic development, regional development, international relations, a greater freedom, but it is not 'legally binding with the STRADT, prospective, we are in the world of decisions. We question future possibles, and future desirables. So afterwards, Prospective goes outside of that and can move into more strategic fields, upstream (Interview, Frédérique Parrad, Chargé de Mission, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 9th July 2008, my translation).

The inherent danger of a project that is not legally binding, supported by a Regional council with no normative powers, is that once completed the future vision can lie dormant. This raises a pertinent question: What previsions are made in the SRADT to guarantee successful implementation of the vision? In short – none. The SRADT cannot be implemented by the region alone; it concerns all regional development actors. It aspires to mobilise in a coherent manner the EU, the State, the Departments and inter-municipal structures associated with civil society (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional 2007, p. 1, my translation). Successful implementation relies on good governance and the collective intention of the territorial actors to take *action*,

The region does not have a regulatory power - no power of guardianship over other *collectivities*⁵³. So we have only one means to make it work, that everyone adheres to the destiny - that we share things. It takes time. People come and defend their patch, then afterwards, they relax and we talk. We adopted it in 2006, but it is not legally binding, so the region is working on the articulation of what the urban mission of the Nord pas de Calais is, elements to preserve the essential bits. It translated these bits in the STRADT into elements we can express in the territory and we work with the French State to make it work (interview, Sylvie Depraetere – Conseil Régionale Nord Pas de Calais, assistant

⁵² Source : Lorens (2008) Powerpoint presentation to Futuribles International , p.6

⁵³ Communities

to Mr. J.F. Caron, elected member of the Regional council of the NPC, 21st February 2008, my translation).

The SRADT takes a long term view of twenty years, largely exceeding the current four year mandate of the Regional councillors, in this sense prospective exercises are a double edged sword. While they shine a light into the future, they also present the real possibility of a *contre – pouvoir* (opposing force) when ideas collected through the prospective process run contrary to policies, a phenomenon that politicians are aware of and perhaps even afraid of. Yet, prospective also provides a ‘diagnosis’ of the territory which is often poorly understood by the politicians themselves (de Courson, Goux-Baudiment, Soulet, 2008, p.15). The role of a prospective exercise is not to contest the authority in power; rather it is to provide decision makers with the necessary information to shape policy. Engaging with the longevity of a prospective project demands ‘stamina’ (cf. Starkman, 2005). Once implemented, it continues into an unknown future. Momentum must be maintained. The alternative is stasis; also a project or *contra*-project, for projects can be put on hold or definitively abandoned, particularly in a climate of uncertainty. Thus, the intention to ‘do something’, to construct the vision, relies not only on courage, stamina and momentum; it calls for an *ingénierie territoriale*⁵⁴ – the *means* to do it.

One significant difference between the two case studies, which subsequently informs how they approach the future in fundamentally different ways, is the transformation in approach from fire fighting to creative thinking, which requires a completely different mindset. This transformation has already been made in the NPC region, with the OREAM experience; there is an acceptance and openness to future thought and now a structure which supports it. The structural implications of futures approaches in Glasgow require further exploration to understand the impact of a shift in thinking from quantitative to qualitative measures on governance and working mechanisms. The structural problem is compounded by the fact that Scottish public services have spent the past thirty years managing decline, that era is now over.

⁵⁴ *Ingénierie territoriale* – territorial engineering. Jean Frebault (General Council of the Ponts et Chaussées School and Ministry of Equipment) provided the following definition during the ‘Days of exchange and information on urban planning agencies’ seminar in 2003: Territorial Engineering refers to all skills and know-how which local authorities need to conduct their missions MULETA: Multilingual & Multimedia Tool on Environment, Town & Country Planning, Building & Architecture http://www.muleta.org/muleta2/rechercheTerme.do?critere=&pays=fra&typeRecherche=1&pager.offset=120&fi_id=849 (accessed 10th January 2011)

Glasgow is entering a state of realisation that it is not managing retreat anymore, I am not certain that it has not yet moved into the space where it has to plan its advance. The strategies and the processes that manage advance are a lot different from managing retreat. If you have a big building on fire, the firemen point hoses, not much tactical thought required. Fire is out, you clear the land and you have a once in a lifetime choice of what you put on that land. That requires strategic thinking and a forward focused mindset which you are no longer responding to the assets from the past, you are responding to the assets you want for the future (interview, Brian Mellon, Frontline Consultants, 12th November, 2007).

As with the NPC region, the Glasgow city region authorities were confronted with the challenge of having no statutory authority when they began working on the visions,

The work that we do effectively means that we have no power. We have maximum responsibility to design the future, but we have no powers to make that future come to pass. We have no capital budget, no power, no statutes; no legislation that would allow us to take that plan of the future and make it work. Ergo the development arm of the future is the development industry, government agencies or whatever. Those are the people that put it in place, ergo we had to make sure that they were part of that future from the very beginning, so the driver of you want is as much a necessity to have them buy into the vision of the future as anything else, because if they took ownership of the future from day one. Then when it come to actually delivering it you don't have the same argument because they are not coming out of it cold, it is essentially what they have agreed to. Obviously you have got to hit the right people within the development industry in terms of futures we have tested. So that's the key driver, get them to buy into it from the beginning, once they have bought it and taken ownership, then hopefully stuff should flow from that and that has been proven to be the case. So in retrospect it was definitely the right thing to do, or we would not have made the progress we have made, we would not have been getting development in the places we wanted to do (Interview, Dr. Grahame Buchan, Strategic Development Plan Manager Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority 9th September 2008).

Planning legislation has changed since the publication of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan (2000) used to inform the Metropolitan City vision. It has been replaced by the strategic development plan, an evolution of the long term spatial development strategy of the structure plan, designed to address the complexity of the drivers of change, both local and global (GCVSDPA, 2011, p.v). The Strategic development planning authority, which replaces the structure plan team, still provides direction for the future of the city-region, in response to current and future drivers of change (GCVSDPA, 2011, p. iv). However, as before, the implementation of the vision relies on the development industry and government agencies.

The role of the SDPA is to act as a coordinator and get all the different groups/agendas around a table and attempt to get an agreement on the future direction and the spatial priorities for the city region. The SDPA is one of the few organizations tasked with thinking long term - hence the use of futures thinking - and the vast majority of the organizations that deliver the strategy don't have that option/luxury/remit open to them. So that is one of the strengths of the SDPA and that is where it brings added value to the process (Interview, Joseph Scott, Futures Analyst, GCVSDPA, 29th June, 2012).

Another important criterion affecting future thought anywhere is the availability of finances necessary to conduct these exercises. In the NPC region the prospective

process is publically funded and also acknowledges the ‘future possible’ of a financial crisis,

It is called the ‘scenario glissant’ or sliding scenario, which draws on the business model of ‘Matra Hachette’⁵⁵it provides a ‘bridge’ between alternative budgets in relation to the ‘rate of economic growth’ (interview, Fabienne Goux-Baudiment, proGective, 11th May 2012, my translation).

Thus, the process is able to continue in times of austerity. Future thought is an ongoing process in the NPC region, here the ‘SRADT permanent’ is supported by a college of prospective, although it is a ‘fragile’ structure,

The idea of the College was to create a set up that will last in time. We did not launch it for two to four years; we launched it for as long as it lasts, until it expires, because people no longer want to participate, we no longer have the means etc. Launched in a strategy of very long term, *very important to keep that in mind!* We are not in a State, or Europe, but a democratic, Perennial, public prospective.....The spirit is more in conformity with prospective, something we have to do all the time, not time to time, or every 10 – 15 years (interview, Pierre-Jean Lorens, Director of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 24th April 2008, my translation).

In the Glasgow city region, the eight local authorities that constitute the SDPA fund future thinking, however, no provision is made in their budget for times of austerity. Here as in France, future thought takes place in a precarious environment,

The futures thinking competent of the SDPA will continue for as long as the constitute authorities of the SDPA think that it is a valuable tool to aid the work of the SDPA or financial budgets dictate otherwise (Interview, Joseph Scott, Futures Analyst, GCVSDPA, 29th June, 2012).

The futures group activity was put on hold when work on the SDP (2011) was completed, however an information analyst continues with horizon scanning. While the NPC region and Glasgow city Region share similar socio-economic profiles, the differences in the budgets and resources available to underpin future thinking might in part be attributed to the political structures that operate in each country,

We (the French) have a very different system,...The means go with the degree of autonomy. You have very little autonomy, we have a lot. In this autonomy we have the power to collect tax, so from that we have the means. A local municipality today has 50% local tax and 50% supported by the state and for the most part we are now at 60% of local finance and 40% state financed. The part of the state is getting weaker and the part of the municipality is growing, from where the necessity for the municipalities that want to develop to look at local development. The more enterprises they have the richer they are, so they function like the enterprises, with a major difference, that an enterprise, when it doesn’t work they close, but a town, cannot close, so they are obliged to be successful, hence the necessity for prospective. It is a prospective that is very

⁵⁵ Matra Hachette – A French conglomerate, formed in 1992 with the merger of Matra, a Defense, Electronics Communications company with Hachette a media group
Source: Reference for Business, Company History Index, ‘Matra-Hachette S.A. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Matra-Hachette S.A.’
<http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/50/Matra-Hachette-S-A.htm> (Accessed 20th May 2012)

operational, that gives onto public policies that are efficient, that is the advantage of France (interview, Goux-Baudiment, proGective, 23rd September 2008, my translation).

The sheer volume of work that is produced during any futures exercise must subsequently be reduced and translated into a coherent planning document. As such it is vulnerable in this phase of transition; it gets diluted or risks being literally 'lost in translation'. The responsibility of 'sifting and sorting', through literally hundreds of pages of prospective reports and translating them into six workable stakes to inform the SRADT was undertaken by the regional council; a laborious process described as follows,

The prospective phase of the SRADT is six hundred people, who work in these prospective groups; the SRADT is a prospective phase and a ten year chart. Behind these tens, or hundreds of prospective orders it is necessary to produce a document with some stakes....Our interest in the region, we work amongst technicians on the chart for the 2003 period. It was not the most complicated for us as technicians; it was more having hundreds of pages of reports. The image of Fabienne Goux- Baudiment was one of gold diggers, sifting through, looking for nuggets.... That was the image she used and that was what we tried to do, but it's extremely complicated work. ..We finish with multiple hours of brainstorming with tables and tables and matrixes to arrive at a project with six stakes for the region (Interview, Mr. Philippe Bouchez, Chef de Service Prospective et Plannification Regionale, Direction du Développement Durable de la Prospective et de l'Evaluation, Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais, 16th June 2010, my translation).

The challenge of deciding what is included or excluded in the SRADT was two-fold: It required the production of stakes that were recognisable to those who participated in this process and politically, non-threatening to the local decision makers. The initial reaction of the prospective working groups to the 'translation process' conducted by the regional council, was initially one of disappointment,

....in sum, "all that for that! We worked hundreds of hours and these six subjects that we could have written it like that. (Ibid).

Despite the best of intentions, somehow something gets lost along the way.

Although the respective futures processes were used to clarify what potentially lies ahead, creating futures narratives which were subsequently used to inform planning policy, there are also other forces at play which shape planning policy,

all contemporary expressions of territory - regional, urban, national - are, to varying degrees, punctuated by and orchestrated through a myriad of trans-territorial networks and relational webs of connectivity....this has some non-trivial repercussions for policy (Macleod and Jones, 2007, p.1185).

The movement of ideas or policies from one situation to another or from one period to another, points towards Said's notion of 'travelling theory' (1983). This notion is helpful in the context of a comparative urban study; it requires consideration of whether movement causes an idea to gain or lose in strength and whether an idea

transplanted from one culture or period in time changes in another cultural setting or time (Said, 1983, p.226). Particularly when, as a preliminary part of their respective futures exercises, both case study examples examined best practice examples and the futures approaches of different places, within their respective countries and elsewhere; although I am unable to comment on how this ‘knowledge’ was later applied. In an environment of increased mobility, the process of policy making is subject to change, where new policies are developed in a comparative frame which recognizes alternative policy options being developed elsewhere (Peck and Theodore, 2010, p.170).

I talk to a lot of people, we’ll call them policy makers, they are aware of cities that are developing around the world. Glasgow is tied up with the OECD on this kind of stuff and it gets connections, they go on learning journeys and so forth. How much of it they bring back? I’m not clear, what they do bring back, is more of a sense of the possible (interview, Brian Mellon, Frontline Consultants, 12th November 2007).

The mobility of policy takes place within the conceptual understanding of place as no longer bounded, but porous and open to flows of people and information. It is embedded in a new understanding of spatial scales and a re-making of urban governance as multi-level governance. Thus, global circuits of policy knowledge shape and are shaped by the social connections between actors. In this context, policy knowledge is produced and performed along the way through the relations between them, in conversations, co-presences and fact finding trips (McCann, 2010, p.112-118). Such exchanges already exist between the NPC region and Glasgow city region, as the former leader of Glasgow district council pointed out,

I used to be convenor of roads and transport for Strathclyde Regional Council. Strathclyde has a number of international networks; we had a Memo of understanding with the Nord Pas de Calais region. I’ve been to Lille several times, they were building Euralille, a typically French Grand projet. I looked at other French cities and their transport systems; I was particularly impressed by what Catherine Trautman did in Strasbourg. I have probably looked at transport in forty cities in Europe and North America, so I have walked around city centres and transport systems. Later on when I was leader of Glasgow City Council, I took the lead on the regeneration of the River Clyde, so I started to visit cities again and look at the waterfronts (interview, Charles Gordon MSP, Scottish Parliament, 5th September 2007).

Furthermore, while in the field, I learned that planning policies at national level in Scotland were inspired by the German spatial planning policies, attributed to networking between a Scottish planner and a German professor at a conference.

Policy knowledge is subject to circumstances, in which the adoption of ‘off the shelf’ policies may be accelerated in times of financial duress or encouraged by international

institutions (McCann, 2010, p.121). In response to the Scottish Cities review exercise, an ‘off the shelf’ approach was deployed in haste, when existing planning policies in Glasgow and across Scotland were swiftly repackaged and submitted to government to download funding from the city growth fund. There is also an increasing tendency to adopt ‘off-the-shelf’ solutions in place of the slower process of in situ policy development, which coupled with ‘ideas from America’ dominating the policy development process, is leading to an intensification of the process of neoliberalisation, US-style (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p.51). This is an option presented in the Metropolitan Glasgow City Region Futures scenario matrix represented in Figure 4.4, in which the vertical axis moves from ‘off the shelf’ - ‘pursuing well understood and successful approaches to city regional development found around the world’, to ‘tailor made’ - ‘strategies that are relatively unique to the specific aspects of a city region or the niche advantage it seeks’ (Frontline Consultants, 2004, p.2). Although the titles of the ‘worlds’ within the scenario matrix were designed to be memorable (Figure 4.4), excruciating vocabulary - ‘getting ahead of the Joneses’ - is symptomatic of the pressure on cities to ‘keep up with – or get a step ahead of – the competition’ and the ways in which neoliberalism inhibits the scope for really innovative local development (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p.47). It does not challenge how decision makers think about the future, it reinforces their comfort zone, by proposing more of the same; it is risk averse and devoid of any fundamental change in worldview. In contrast, the Voynet law, through refusing to prescribe, allows more scope for innovative thinking, it presents the opportunity for made to measure solutions to local questions.

Since its emergence immediately post war, Prospective has become accepted as a valid line of inquiry and continues to be active at government level in France. The decentralization laws, coupled with the success of the earlier OREAM du nord exercise (1971), gave credibility to prospective thought in the NPC and have enabled it to become embedded within the Regional council where prospective is central to decision making. Earlier in this chapter I argued that in Scotland, future thinking is a more recent activity (Figure 4.2), with no historical precedent; it is struggling to emerge in a culture which promotes evidence based policy, thus future thought has been relegated to the margins of decision making. In the last decade, futures exercises have been intermittent and contingent, presented as the latest shiny new policy in

urban planning, practiced in very imperfect ways by city elites, embedded in a business culture, concerned with ‘step change’ and delivery,

The Accounting profession are taking over - it is all about due diligence
(Professor Peter McKiernan, Dean of the School of Management at St Andrews University Business School, 7th November, 2007).

I will now discuss what ‘step change’ is and the inherent constraints of such an approach.

4.3.1 The step change approach

Every generation has a blind spot. In retrospect, ways of doing things which appear obvious to future generations, yet which were either overlooked, or perhaps not considered as relevant at the time. The trajectory of the successive prospective projects in the NPC region illustrates this phenomenon. Here, the centralized pre-oil crisis OREAM du nord, a document of its time, that aspired to address regional problems through a technocratic building works proposals, was succeeded by the SRADT, a 21st century sustainable analysis of a specifically ‘social demand’ and to its fulfillment⁵⁶ (fields of what is desirable and possible) and part of an ongoing learning loop. It is my contention that the Metropolitan Glasgow City Region vision process also has a blind spot. It is driven in a particular way by business elites, operating within the city region, creating an undercurrent which precludes free thinking. In Scotland future thinking is still embryonic in its development; therefore the first tentative steps into this field (as in the NPC Region) must be understood in the context of learning how to do futures. However, the financial constraints and limited time available to conduct a robust futures exercise in the Glasgow city region, point more towards risk analysis and strategy than robust future thinking. A train of thought which stems from central government, whose primary purpose is

To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth⁵⁷.

A “growth first” approach to urban development, is promoted and normalised by neoliberalism; an approach which pervades both political discourse and future thinking in Scotland (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p.47). A ‘neoliberal newspeak’ which

⁵⁶ Région Nord Pas de Calais Conseil Regional, Direction Générale SRADT, Powerpoint Presentation, 2002, p.9, my translation

⁵⁷ The Scottish Government, ‘The Government’s Purpose’
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About> (Accessed 1st July 2012)

Bourdieu and Wacquant warned has a performative power of its own, able to realize the realities it claims to describe. It mimics science, through superimposing the appearance of political or economic reason, and can be used by decision makers as an instrument for the construction and evaluation of policies (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001, p.4). This approach is evident in the language deployed in the central question of the initial Metropolitan Future led by Scottish Enterprise and accompanying scenario matrix (Figure, 4.4),

In what ways can we achieve a step change in the international competitiveness of the Glasgow Metropolitan City Region?

`Step change` vocabulary reflects the ambitions of Scottish Enterprise to promote Glasgow `to a higher quartile in the international cities league`, through the improvements required to move from the current trajectory to one which will realize the vision (Glasgow Economic Forum, 2006, p.11). The `Step change` approach is the antithesis of Robinson's understanding of *all* cities as `ordinary`, as opposed to positioned within world city league tables, discussed in chapter 1. It represents the view from above. The standpoint of `ordinary cities` presents the opportunity to reframe policy for cities defined as `off the map` and caught within a very narrow construction of urban development. This inhibits the scope of imaginings of possible urban futures: Looking for ways to fit into globalization, emulating the apparent successes of other cities or developmentalist initiatives (Robinson, p.546, 2002). `Ordinary cities` are not the imaginings of business elites; rather they are concerned with the qualitative aspect of cities as `places to live` - by acknowledging the voices of ordinary people – they are the view from below.

4.3.2 The dreaming city: Glasgow 2020

Other futures imaginings of Glasgow exist. In stark contrast to the business culture of the metropolitan city region vision, the think tank DEMOS published an urban futures project in 2007, `the Dreaming City: Glasgow 2020 and the power of mass imagination`, described as an experiment in opening up a city's future, through a programme of events which reached out across the city and its citizens - using `stories and storytelling to provoke thinking about the future`⁵⁸. To prevent this exercise descending into an insular conversation about Glasgow, DEMOS conducted a small

⁵⁸ DEMOS, `The Dreaming City`

<http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/thedreamingcity> (accessed 9th July 2012)

programme of events in other European cities, including Helsinki, Gothenburg, Stockholm, Amsterdam and Barcelona, with three objectives: Firstly, the development of conversations in other cities, to permit the sharing of experiences and to determine what was specific to Glasgow and other trends; secondly, the development of futures literacy and finally, to design and test a process of mass imagination (Hassan et al, 2007, p.18). Its methodology rejects the use of scenario planning in place of 'story telling'.

There is also an issue around scenarios being quite institutional in their focus, top down and not about the people, so we thought we would entirely embrace the idea of going down stories and stories that people tell and get people in our event to tell stories....every public agency in the city, twenty of them bought into the project and what they bought into was a project that wasn't about the institutional voices in the city, it was about the non institutional spaces. What are people thinking beyond institutions, so that gained them, the city council, a different insight into the city. We gave that back to them in a book and a report, I'll give you a copy, it tried to make sense of it without wrapping it up for them (interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 11th August 2008).

This project posits an alternative to what it describes as the 'official future' of the city,

Start talking about story, narrative and the language we use really matters, the language of the official version of the city, of Scotland, by the government and gets more complex, and jargonesque, and if the way we are going is the policy class of the west, it's own secret language and it's quite complex (interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 11th August 2008).

The DEMOS project is the beginning of a 'manifesto for the 'open city'' as described by Sennett (2006) (Hassan et al, 2007, p.228). For Sennett, the characteristics of an open system, realized in an 'open city', includes 'principles of porosity of territory, narrative indeterminacy and incomplete form'. It is concerned with democratic form as a physical experience; specifically, it focuses on citizenship and issues of participation (Sennett, 2006, p.4). This is the thrust of the DEMOS project,

.....thinking about the concept of every day democracy and really this project became one of the exemplars of putting it into practice and influencing that and really fantastic. Glasgow 2020 is not a conventional think tank piece of work, it is a piece that blurs the line between policy, ideas, artistic imagination, just the general sense of what the future is and what it means to be human (interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 11th August 2008).

It proposes an alternative to the 'closed city', by opening the future of Glasgow to the mass imagination of its citizens (Hassan et al, 2007, p.196). It called for the creation of spaces where cities could develop shared stories about the future and proposed 'assemblies of hope' as a means to provide the conditions to develop shared goals and dreams (Ibid, p.226).

One of the big things that emerged early on was this thing about lack of agency, so we got all this sense of hope being basically everywhere, if you just listen hard enough, ask the right questions, or just shut up and listen (interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 11th August 2008).

Although the DEMOS project was misunderstood by most of the largely institutional interviewees who expressed a view on this project, it is also helpful in several ways: Firstly, it identified the need for the creation of spaces to develop shared stories about the future or ‘assemblies of hope’,

Spaces where artists, activists, entrepreneurs, people with environmental concerns, business people, public officials and people from no sector could find peer support, encouragement and hope. They would aspire to open up a space for imagination and non-institutional thinking, and provide activities such as mentoring, discussions, shadowing, developing ideas and fostering collaboration in practical projects (Hassan et al, 2007, p.27).

An idea that resonates with the comments of many of the interviewees in Glasgow, who identified the need to bring future thinking out of the margins and into view, particularly the need for a more permanent space where futures questions could be explored. These spaces bear some resemblance to the *fabriques* that are now part of the SRADT permanent in France. Secondly, while the planning authorities acknowledge the challenge of involving the general public in urban planning issues, there is perhaps something to be learned from the DEMOS experience, which succeeded in engaging five thousand Glaswegians, from different communities of place, interest and identity, including civic and public institutions in their dreaming city project (Hassan et al, 2007, p.17). Thirdly, according to Hassan, the project had a Glasgow, Scottish and international impact;

In the city it led to certain public agencies - health and police - would be good examples being emboldened to be more radical, imaginative and less silo based. It also contributed to a range of community futures initiatives - Govan has a couple of examples but elsewhere too. Second at a Scottish level it led to a range of small local projects starting off - Dundee is an illustrative case here - which took direct encouragement from Glasgow 2020. And third we had a range of international groups and currents that we know of use the materials, example and ideas to dare to challenge the official future in their work (interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 5th August, 2012).

Finally, although the project secured the interest and support of the head of Glasgow City Council at that time,

The futures thing changes the city and that official view of the city is so powerful, at city level Purcell was fascinated and engaged with the project and loved the quirky stuff. How you then move that, if he wants to he is stuck in. It's extremely difficult, I wouldn't want to be in his shoes (Ibid).

As an experiment, the DEMOS project was largely misunderstood by many of the metropolitan vision participants, mostly institutional actors, I interviewed while in the field, who claimed it had no concrete objectives. This might be partly attributed to the methodology deployed in this project which deliberately sought to avoid the use of

scenarios, which DEMOS claim presents a view from above, in favor of the view from below, through, 'story telling'. Specifically it was not concerned with the institutional voices in the city as per the Glasgow Metropolitan futures project; rather it was about the non institutional spaces, such as the ephemeral 'story telling workshops' which informed the project. Although it successfully made an impact at Glasgow, Scottish and international level, its aims were modest,

one always has to acknowledge that no one time specific project on its own changes a city; it at best offers a window, set of resources and a provocation (interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 5th August, 2012).

Resistance to the DEMOS project might also be attributed to the fact its futures point in a very different direction to much urban policy with an emphasis on step change (Hassan et al, 2007, p.227). Or as DEMOS pointed out, it requires looking beyond the structures and tools of the closed city, 'to help begin to close the gap between the cities people want and the cities people get' (Hassan et al, 2007, p.207). Findings of this type are addressed in French prospective exercises, when the participants become aware of the gap between the 'lived territory', as perceived by the inhabitants and those of politics and government (Soulet, cited in Goux-Baudiment, F, Soulet, G and de Courson, J, 2008, p.26). Thus, one of the principal challenges of prospective thought is concerned with the adjustments to be made to reduce the gap between the administrative and lived territory (Ibid). Paradoxically, the prospective approach of the NPC is in direct contrast to the territorial marketing approach, of *nouvelle utopia* deployed in Lille, the capital of the region. Although marketing techniques have traditionally sought to avoid a gap between image and reality, in Lille it is deliberately so; the gap has become a selling point (Thiard, 2007, p.152-153).

4.3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the trajectory of prospective thinking in the Glasgow city region where it has only recently emerged, juxtaposed with the experience of the NPC region, where it has been practiced for more than forty years and within a country which was widely considered a pioneer in the modern futurist movement. From the research findings presented in this chapter, it is clearly evident that the futures experience of the NPC region is more advanced than the Glasgow City Region experience with which it is compared. Earlier in this thesis, I argued this does not preclude a comparison between the two, as Tilly explained, researchers must ensure that the logic of comparison, 'fits our aims like a sweat-shirt and not like a straight

jacket' (1984, p. 80). The two case study examples were selected on the basis that they already had much in common: both are 'post-industrial' places with similar population demographics and socio-economic profiles, looking to move forward. I have deliberately chosen Tilly's *individualizing* comparison to highlight 'the peculiarities of each case' (Ibid), which as described earlier, only became apparent in the course of a comparative study. It is my contention that the 'peculiarities' of the NPC region, coupled with the depth of experience from previous exercises conducted in this region, may be used as a case study example to learn from. I will now consider how this might be achieved.

Chapter 5

Regional Discourse as a Performative Discourse

5.0 Introduction

In this second and more succinct findings chapter, I wish to discuss how the NPC region may be used as a case study example that the Glasgow City region could learn from, by building on the findings in chapter four, where I discussed the trajectory of future thought in each site and the mechanics of how it is implemented. Here, I wish to examine Bourdieu's notion of a regional discourse as a 'performative discourse' (1980, p.66), specifically how this notion leads to the respective futures narratives being enacted in imperfect ways, by performing some futures and not others. I do so in two ways: firstly by discussing the notion 'performativity', explored in the literature review, in relation to the OREAM. I then focus on how performativity predisposes city elites to some enact some practices, rather than others by considering the constituency of these narratives, who is being influenced, why and to what ends; to understand how these exercises produce stakeholders, decision-makers and publics, in ways that include the usual profiles and authoritative voices and marginalize (albeit unintentionally) ordinary people. The chapter concludes by surmising how the depth of experience in future thought in the NPC region can be helpful to the Glasgow city region futurists as an example to learn from. I will now discuss the notion of 'regional discourse as a 'performative discourse' (cf. Bourdieu, 1980).

5.1 Performativity and the Narratives of Possible Futures

In the literature review, I discussed Bourdieu's claim that a regionalist discourse is a 'performative discourse', brought into existence by the act of 'social magic', which proposes to produce the thing named (1980, p.66). While it is still too early to comment on the success of the SRADT or the Glasgow futures exercise as 'performative discourses'; it is my contention that the futures process which informs both narratives, is instrumental in 'enacting' or 'performing' possible futures, bringing them into view (or not). In the particular case of the NPC region, the 'compulsion to repeat' (Butler, 1999, p.185) the regional discourse, over the last forty years, through the OREAM and subsequently in tandem with policy and political discourses, has rendered it visible as an entity. It has also brought to the fore the

competing global and world cities discourse; notably neighbouring world cities: London, Paris and Brussels, which physically encircle the NPC region. The dominant discourse and collective performative force of these neighbouring ‘mega-attractors’ has the potential to stifle the voice of the ‘ordinary city’ discourse of the NPC region, led by its capital Lille, which features on the GaWC inventory of World cities, Category Diii - Minimal evidence of world city formation (Figure, 1.2). Hence the necessity of prospective, to engage with the challenges these competing urban discourses create and help put the NPC region back on the map.

The OREAM du Nord also *did* something; as a ‘regional discourse’ for local decision makers to draw on, it enabled them to ‘perform’ the possible futures within it. By choosing to enact the possible future that was presented in the form of a ‘building works proposal’, the NPC region has effectively chosen to break with the dystopic narrative of decline, as described in the ‘diagnosis’ of the region presented in the OREAM, which had persisted in the public imagination and become synonymous with the image of the region. Published in 1971, it warned of the potential upheavals in a region heavily influenced by nineteenth century urban and industrial structures and called for the region (nord) to participate in its development to achieve this transformation (OREAM, 1971, p.43). A generation later, this transformation is in the process of becoming and many of the points identified in the OREAM have been carried forward into the SRADT. The OREAM envisaged the Channel tunnel, a business centre at Lille (Euralille), and cross border relations. A century after the industrial revolution, the OREAM announced the arrival of a second revolution, the coming ‘post-industrial society’. Retrospective analysis has demonstrated the OREAM du nord largely achieved what it announced,

The OREAM du nord was a gigantic work, very interesting, from underground, infrastructure to the great European flows. They envisaged the tunnel, the TGV a business centre at Lille, the structuring of the region and cross border relations. What was realised here is not exactly that, but it is very similar. All our political decision makers had this in the background of their ‘hard drive’. Now that’s it’s done, they have nothing in their heads, we have emptied the hard drive if you wish. It is necessary to redo a reflection, to project ourselves 20 – 40 years ahead (interview, Jean-François Stevens, Professor Emeritus of development and planning at the University of Lille, 16th January 2008, my translation).

While accepting the OREAM represented a ‘hard drive’ or ‘regional discourse’ for local ‘political decision makers’ to draw on, all futures discourse, including the

OREAM, are prone to succumb to fire-fighting, whereby elites are pressured to enact some practices, rather than others,

I am an academic and local politician. I have noticed that lots of decisions are not taken from a prospective concern, but by the pressure of the immediate. This is not systematically the case, but it is often the case. We take little measures to resolve the problem that we are confronted with, without realising that in so doing we are engaging ourselves in a path that is not alone, it should be part of prospective, as advised. After ten to fifteen years, we come to realise that we have not achieved what we wanted to achieve. That is not always true, eg. TGV, it was la prospective, it has been done, even the metro (Interview, Mr. Bertrand Delbecq, formerly of the University of Lille 1, the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences and Municipal councilor - Tourcoing until 2008, 6th June 2008, my translation).

at the moment the future, in a way, the immediate always overtakes the important (Interview, Jim MacKinnon, Chief Planner, The Scottish Government, 16th May 2008).

When Migrating from an academic exercise to the pragmatic exercise of decision making, the resulting regional discourse becomes distilled, it is forced to adapt, as was the case with the more recent SRADT,

It was not comprehensive either. We knew perfectly well that we could not look at everything, that there would be subjects that we could not treat, that there would be blancs *and* that it was just as important to identify the blancs - why we had not spoken about that in the approach (interview, Mr. Philippe Bouchez, Chef de Service Prospective et Plannification Regionale, Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais, 16th June 2010, my translation).

Yet, in planning terms, the performativity of the regional discourse (OREAM and SRADT) has rendered it a meaningful geographical entity, unit of development and economic activity through research, planning practice and government policy.

Post-decentralisation, Bourdieu's understanding of social institutions as being 'static' is redundant in the context of the performativity of the SRADT, which is concerned with an emerging governance.

We are in a period that is exceptional in terms of transition in the world. Today we call that governance, tomorrow, that will just be a normal way to govern. We can no longer govern as before, because the passage to the local authority pyramid, the base line of the pyramid, you cannot do as before, it's finished. We are in the process of changing our system of thinking and governance is part of this system *en rato* (base line of the pyramid); we don't have a choice (interview, Fabienne Goux-Baudiment, proGective, 23rd September 2008).

Today, the speech act is no longer the 'rite of institution' (Butler, 1997, p.147). Forty years after the OREAM, the SRADT is concerned with a 'new era, new life time: new needs' (Région Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional 2007, p. 13). It adopts a bottom up approach, it is concerned with the 'social demand' (Lorens, 2004, p.206). It incites local inhabitants to become 'the principal actors of their own futures', in particular those most removed from public life, or 'fragile' members of society (Région Nord

Pas de Calais, Conseil Régional 2007, p. 90). Bourdieu's notion of 'social magic', proposes to bring into existence the 'thing named', in this instance the future described in the SRADT, and is proportional to the authority of the speaker (Bourdieu, 1980, p.66). As discussed earlier, the 'social magic' is composed of the network of regional actors or 'epistemic community' of the SRADT, which although aspiring to be inclusive, fell short of expectations,

We are one hundred and fifty in the College- in the development of the STRADT, there were several hundred people. What do we do now with all those actors that are not in the college? That's my preoccupation, so that we do not find ourselves amongst ourselves and not continuing to advance. My preoccupation is sharing, when we participate in the College, how do we put that information elsewhere? How do we bring in what we see? We are witnesses to the territory. Sometimes, I'm afraid we cite *agence d'agglomération* as actors of the territory, as they are told at the Université Populaire. Not for me, they are *observers*, not actors, in terms of being close to the population (Interview, Esther Dassonville, Collège de Prospective, 8th July, 2008).

Drawing on Butler's understanding of performativity, , the very act of 'authorizing' a citizen's 'speech act', that prior to the futures exercise had no authorization, may 'anticipate and instate an altered context for its future reception' (Butler, 1997, p.160). This is the case in the NPC region, where the regional council acknowledge the SRADT exercise was more *astroturf* than grassroots, a point they are trying to redress, with the encouragement of a Mr. Jean-François Caron, a local Green Mayor, who is pushing for more public engagement in this process.

In Butler's terms, a discourse has the 'authority' to bring into existence the 'thing named' when it echoes prior actions and '*accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior and authoritative set of practices*' (Butler, 1997, p.51, original emphasis). Although it is too early to make any assessment on the success of the performativity of the Glasgow case study example at this time, the '*prior and authoritative set of practices*' embedded in a business culture language which as I described above, is repeated in the discourse of numerous institutions in Scotland: The Scottish governments' central objective, the future vision by Glasgow District Council and the 'step change approach' published by Scottish Enterprise. Through repetition, the business culture language gains authority and is rendered legitimate. In Scotland the 'performative operation of authorization and entitlement' (Butler, 1997, p.157), is dominated by institutions who speak in their own name, as opposed to the *intuitu personae* concept deployed in the NPC, where actors are 'authorised' to express their own personal views, rather than those of the institutions

who employ them. Is it possible this is a contributory factor to the ‘silo mentality’ that pervades Scottish institutions?

Finally, both case study futures exercises adopted a *normative* approach which, according to Masini, consists of developing futures from which we then look for the means in the present that enable the desirable future to be achieved, an approach often referred to as *backcasting* (2000, p.18). Drawing on the work of the neuroscientist Ingvar, the human brain stores a repertoire of action plans for future behavior and cognition, based on past events and the awareness of the now situation, which is continuously rehearsed and optimized. This repertoire of images, which are retained and later recalled, he described as ‘memories of the future’, which form the basis for anticipation and expectation, coupled with the short and long-term planning of a goal-directed behavioral and cognitive repertoire (1985, p.127). Extending this logic to the normative approach that constructs the repertoire of images that compose the regional future, participation in a futures exercise is conducive to the construction of these ‘memories of the future’, which might later be recalled and enacted. Having discussed the notion of performativity relative to the futures narrative, it is now time to explore the destination of this work, in other words, who is being influenced, why and to what ends.

5.2 The constituency of futures narratives

Firstly, in the NPC region, the range of actors involved in the construction of this narrative is rich and multi layered, involving the public and private sectors, the general public and consultants from outside the region.

We cannot think that we can produce a vision alone in our corner. The product of a regions’ vision is also ‘bottom up’ and we must have the ‘*forces vives*’ (life blood) participate in this work....We do nothing alone. Systemically in partnership, systemically with participation and with an openness of all of the partners, we are ‘chefs de fil’ (leader) (interview, Lorens, Director of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 24th April 2008, my translation).

In accordance with the Voynet Law, the regional council deployed a participative approach. While the 2020 exercise (SRADT) aspired to capture the voices of all the people in the Nord Pas-de Calais, logistically this is not possible; not everyone can participate in a region with a population of four million inhabitants. A challenge which the Regional Council responded to through a concerted effort to capture a broad spectrum of opinion across different layers of society by involving six hundred

participants, in a structured, democratic manner (Figures 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7). Madame Parrad of the Regional council surmised the challenge of implementing a participative approach versus resorting to the usual stakeholders and authoritative voices as follows,

We are very sensitive to the question of participation. JF Caron is always trying to push us so that we get wider, and associate more people, etc. You must see that we are not in the 'democratie participatif'. In our themes, and above all our means, to allow one thousand people to participate in a correct manner without 'ridiculing them' - requires great means. It is for that reason that we are attempting to construct a '*collective intelligence*'. In my opinion this is what prospective permits, to bring in a group of people from various milieus to construct a future together. I think you have to be relatively modest; we don't even touch 1% of the population here...It is a story. There are different people who carry it and then it is followed up (interview, Frederique Parrad, Chargé de Mission, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 9th July 2008, my translation).

Although the regional council aspired to open this participatory approach to a wide audience, to include a broad range of actors, creating networks between them, ultimately, it largely captured an institutional public and marginalised, albeit unintentionally, ordinary people, as Lorens observed,

...actors from diverse institutions who were implicated in the SRADT approach finished by sharing a vision of the world and by adhering at once to a method and to defined orientations. Even if it was essentially technicians, the fact that actors came from different, if not competing, institutional horizons (state, regional council, urban communities, etc.) is an important point, because we can make the hypothesis that that they would not otherwise have the same conception of their relations with their partners, that these will be naturally less competitive. Drawing on a concept often used in the analysis of networks, we can make the hypothesis that the SRADT process allowed the creation of an 'epistemic community' (Lorens, 2004, p.209, my translation).

While the regional council recognizes the need to engage a wide audience, the challenge of prospective thinking remains how to achieve this effectively and in ways which do not 'scare' local politicians who potentially have the power to stop the proceedings definitively if the future envisaged represents a *contre pouvoir* or threat to a political vision. As discussed above, it is worthy of note that publication of the SRADT was interrupted until after the regional elections.

The principles and method of development of the SRADT revolved around three dynamics: institutional, expertise and participative (Region Nord Pas de Calais, Conseil Regional, 2007, p.1). The Regional council are instrumental in the selection of the categories of actors invited to participate in the prospective process. The futures consulting firm proGective, who facilitated the futures exercise, designed a grid to identify key local players or *Acteurs locaux concernés* (ALC) who have an important contribution to make to the narrative. It is informed by a typology of actors, which Fabienne Goux Baudiment, the founder of ProGective described as follows:

We have a classification, so we ask them⁵⁹ to identify people who have an influence in their territory in these categories. In the criterion, we have the *influence* of people, those who come in on a personal title, and those who are chosen by their influence e.g. a journalist. The second criterion is *role*, there are roles that are important e.g. Rector of an academy, even if the man is not interesting, it is his role that is interesting in the management of a territory. Then we have what we call *authority*, the president of the regional council, the Prefect, people who are at the summit of power. So there we have three criterion. In general that gives a list that is about 150 – 200 to 300 people. Afterwards, there are people who want to participate, but who can't etc. (interview, Goux-Baudiment, proGective, 23rd September 2008, my translation).

These actors were divided into three distinct categories: Political, Economical and Societal, as illustrated in Figures 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 respectively in the annex. Furthermore, the actors are compelled to participate as *intuitu personae*, representing their views alone, not those of the institutions they represent (Goux-Baudiment, cited in Goux-Baudiment, F, Soulet, G and de Courson, J, 2008, p.66). *Prospective participative* aims to create a 'process of dialogue and collective construction' between both institutional and non institutional actors, whose individual concerns might, otherwise be in conflict. As Soulet pointed out, the prospective exercise is the occasion when participants are made aware of the discrepancies between the imaginings of the territory as perceived by the inhabitants and those of the decision makers.

One of the main stakes of prospective thinking is focused on the adjustments to be made to reduce the gap between the administrative territory and lived territory (Soulet, 2008, p.24).

Within these categories, the 'top thirty' most powerful actors were invited to participate in workshops, in three groups of ten, where they were presented with a diagnosis of the territory and questionnaire results from which they voted on the composite elements that formed the vision of the future⁶⁰. Another category of actor not represented in this grid is the prospectivist who facilitated the working groups. Their remit is concerned with assisting, *not* influencing 'collective intelligence'.

The Glasgow Metropolitan City Region futures project was supported by a Steering Group, composed of representatives from Scottish Enterprise (Glasgow and National); Glasgow City and North Lanarkshire Councils; the Structure Plan team; Strathclyde European Partnership and an academic from the University of Glasgow (Scottish

⁵⁹ 'Them' refers to the Regional Council

⁶⁰ Source: Goux-Baudiment - proGective. Powerpoint presentation (2001) : mémo Audit des ALC [acteurs locaux concernés], p. 12

Enterprise, 2005, p.3). In addition to the Steering Group – a wider reference group⁶¹ were included in testing the scenarios, once developed, monitoring progress and outputs on behalf of their organisations and acting as a vital communication mechanism for the process (Ibid). The facilitator of Glasgow process identified three categories of people that are required to participate in a futures exercise,

There are those that have got their hands on levers of power and resources that can then start to make things happen as a consequence. There are those that are bright, sparky and innovate and have ideas to bring to the table and they are quite often not leaders or senior members of organisations. The third group is people that if you don't bring them in early on, can slam a torpedo into it later on and be highly disruptive, so you weave them in early, it then becomes quite difficult for them to be as disruptive. No, can be constructively disruptive inside a project, you don't want negatively disruptive outside of it. So those are the three categories of people that you need (interview, Brian Mellon, Frontline Consultants, 12th November 2007).

The Glasgow futures process also included one-to-one interviews and workshops with consultees from the public, private and third sectors and 'remarkable individuals' to provide expert input in the following fields: technology, media/ political/civic society commentators in addition to experts in scientific, planning and academic communities (Scottish Enterprise, 2005, p.3).

The Glasgow project was quite simple, the usual suspects, it was who is out there in the network that would be interested in such stuff. If Scotland is a village, Glasgow is a small part of that village; it's not hard to do. From memory, I wasn't as closely involved, but they did look to try and find more stakeholder groups and use them in a kind of Delphi process, but that was a double edged sword in a lot of ways. It created a lot of information, rather than data and knowledge; just became noise really (Interview Dr. Iain Docherty, University of Glasgow, Business School, 31st March, 2008).

Surprisingly, in the Glasgow futures process, no representatives of any religious faith were involved, as was the case in the NPC region. In a city which is renowned for continued sectarian tensions, this apparent oversight is also a missed opportunity to involve all communities, particularly ethnic minorities, who, as far as I am aware, were not represented in the futures exercise. Although an attempt was made to capture a broad spectrum of stakeholders during this process, some of whom live outside the city region, they are not representative of the cultural diversity of the Glasgow city region. They are all white and predominately middle aged and male, which presents a very narrow point of view. In contrast to the NPC process, where actors all called to participate as *intuitu personae*, representing their views alone, this was not the case in the Glasgow process. Indeed, documentation which supports the futures process

⁶¹ Reference Group - composed of representatives of all Metropolitan area LECs (5) and Councils (8); Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Executive, Scottish Water and City of Edinburgh Council

includes a subtitle, 'What's in this for me and for my organisation' (Frontline Consultants, 2004, p.2)? While in the field, many of the interviewees commented on the absence of a champion to drive this process at city level, compounded by the absence of senior level commitment to this project from many participating organisations, due to time constraints. Finally, the more recent futures thinking carried out by a futures group in 2009 for the Strategic development plan captured a similar pool of participants, the names of the participating organisations can be found in the annex. With the exception of one academic, this list is composed exclusively of institutional actors, again predominately male and white.

Having specified the categories of actors involved in future thinking, it is now time to discuss why these individuals were involved in this exercise and importantly to what ends. Future thinking is a powerful tool, deployed to raise awareness of the stakes and emerging trends that concern the region among the participants that engaged in the futures exercise. Specifically, it draws attention to the notion of 'future possibles' (plural), the existence of potentially multiple paths of action that may (or may not) be investigated in response to these phenomena. Consciously or otherwise, future thinking influences behaviors, as participants carry what they have learned during this process, beyond the limits of the futures exercise and into their professional lives, as observed in the NPC region and Glasgow Metropolitan region respectively,

Something happens in a territory, there is a 'mise en mouvement'⁶² through the exchanges, even if you don't continue it ⁶³after the exercise. If, two years after, there is a guy who calls you and says, 'do you remember me; we were in the same group'? We did a study 'Limousin 2017', and this is what was shown: The relationship is that people have it on a shelf and each time they have a decision to take, they re-open it (interview, Goux-Baudiment, proGective, 23rd September 2008, my translation).

Actually gathering a group of people in a room for two days - and I was one of them - thirty of us locked in a hotel in the middle of no-where, to force us to think and to talk to one another. It was great, because we actually did. We even had some debate about what we thought was happening in the world and what the national agenda was. I thought that process was excellent! (Interview, Dr. Iain Docherty, University of Glasgow, Business School, 7th August 2007).

For actors involved in the futures exercise, exposure to different positionalities during the process widens their angle of vision and is conducive to the construction of social networks between them. Participation in a futures exercise may also influence the

⁶² 'mise en mouvement' - set in motion (my translation)

⁶³ 'it' refers to the document produced after the futures exercise.

behavior of many actors, from that of a passive attitude to the future, or at best reactive, to a preactive or best proactive, attitude, whereby they are able to anticipate and subsequently provoke change by taking the appropriate action (Delamarre and Malhomme, 2002, p.53). Recent writings on visioning have demonstrated that the process of visioning is sometimes more helpful than any document that may result from such an exercise. A point confirmed when in the field,

Exercises are very different, because their first utility is to connect people. So that local actors who never meet, or have time to meet; exchange fundamental ideas on the future of the territory. They will speak about the little details of a dossier, but never on what you want for the future of the territory. That is the very first virtue of a territorial exercise (interview, Goux-Baudiment, proGective, 23rd September 2008, my translation).

A study conducted by Shipley and Newkirk revealed that visioning consultants observed this process not only contributes to helping people think in different ways, but also to confronting the legitimate concerns of others. Quite simply, it is seeing from another's point of view. An exercise, which they suggested, may subsequently motivate participants to take action (Shipley and Newkirk, 2000, p.585).

This 'change in behaviour' is not restricted to the interaction of key local actors, in the case of the NPC region it aspired to reach *all* the inhabitants of the Region. To achieve this aim, the Prospective exercise in the NPC region was supported by a massive campaign of 'communication'. It entailed public debates, the publication of a number of documents available online and a survey of 15-24 year olds on their perception of the future of the region (Région Nord Pas de Calais Conseil Regional, Direction Générale SRADT, Powerpoint Presentation, 2002, p.68, my translation).

The objective is not just public investment; it is also a change in behaviour of all our citizens.....show people that their future is in their hands, not in the hands of the big decision makers (interview, Jean-François Stevens, Professor Emeritus of development and planning at the University of Lille, 16th January 2008, my translation).

In Scotland however, the futures exercise captured a much narrower audience, although there are aspirations to widen the process,

In Scotland unless you are going to put a motorway through someone's back garden no one will get involved; there's apathy there. It's not meant to be unpleasant; it is in fact a reality, we would love to break it, we did try using various types of community groupings and panels and all kinds of stuff. We never managed to elicit the kind of interest we wanted (Interview, Dr. Grahame Buchan, Strategic Development Plan Manager Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority 9th September 2008).

Yet ultimately, futures exercises have political ambitions. In both settings, it is undertaken to clarify the future possibilities for decision makers,

The destination of prospective for us is the service of execution (implementation) of the regional policy services. It is for that, that we get into something regular and durable so that this reflex be permanently in the heads of the technicians and elected people of the region....So the destination is not the use of Territorial marketing.....*We have really decided to put Prospective at the heart of the political logic of administration of the production of our policies and it is important to mention it* (interview, Lorens, Director of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 24th April 2008, my translation)!

Obviously I have to get political clearance to do this, because in the end, there is a question of cost benefit, or cost effectiveness, of doing this, because if we get null return and you have put a lot of time and resources into it, then politically that doesn't sing very well....I have cited Amsterdam and New York, this idea of stories of the future.....That's exciting, but whether we will be allowed to too politically (Interview, Dr. Grahame Buchan, Strategic Development Plan Manager Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority 9th September 2008).

The political dimension is complex in terms of being able to influence policy without distancing decision makers,

I think to be efficient and so that there is a destination for all this, it is necessary that the teams be inside the places where decisions are being made, but we have perhaps other types of difficulty, to convince, not to frighten the elected representatives next to us (of the regional council), but I think in terms of usage and added value it is more interesting to be at the heart of this set up than at its edges (interview, Lorens, Director of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 24th April 2008, my translation).

Whereas, in Scotland, future thinking is not at the heart of decision making, here it is still in its infancy and peripheral to decisions making,

It has always just been part of the preparatory work leading up to it, so that people see the plan and are buying into it, the development is going ahead where we want it to, but very few people will know from where it emanated.... seen as academic, on the margins of core decision making. The fact that it lead to core decision making is not something that they are particularly interested in, it's just the decision making they are interested in (Interview, Dr. Grahame Buchan, Strategic Development Plan Manager Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority 9th September 2008).

In the particular case of the NPC region, the political dimension calls for a balance between 'reassuring' local politicians and satisfying the needs of the participants involved in this process.

The initial schedule (SRADT) was 2001-2003; there were regional elections in 2004. Finally for reasons that were internal to the Region and validated by all, the Regional Council did not wish to validate the SRADT just before the regional elections, but preferred to wait for the regional election, so that after they could validate with other partners their SRADT project.....There was a year where we interrupted the sound and light on the thinking surrounding the SRADT. For the people who followed us in 2002 in this working group...for a year to a year and a half, they asked themselves a question and they said, "they made us think and think together, for a regional project and finally nothing is coming out of it" (interview, Mr. Philippe Bouchez, Chef de Service Prospective et Plannification Regionale, Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais, 16th June 2010, my translation).

Although neither case study has the statutory authority to implement the possible futures that have been envisaged, the strength of both processes lies in the fact they were co-constructed by a number of regional actors who support it and will later apply it,

Through the creation of a common language, the first step towards a common project (Interview, Mr. Philippe Bouchez, Chef de Service Prospective et Planification Regionale, Direction du Développement Durable de la Prospective et de l’Evaluation, Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais, 16th June 2010, my translation).

I think to do it simply to key up a strategy that will be fit for purpose, against more than one scenario, is probably not that compelling as a reason to do it. A more compelling reason is to get a common language about possible futures (Interview, Kevin Kane, Scottish Enterprise, 9th January 2008).

In this manner, future thinking aspires to challenge received ideas and change behaviors. It extends beyond the limits of institutional structures and as time elapses becomes embedded in behaviors. Having discussed the notion of performativity and constituency of the futures narratives, I will now discuss what might be learned from the thesis findings in both this and the preceding chapter.

5.3 Conclusion: Learning from the NPC experience

In the introduction to this thesis I discussed the difficulty of mainstreaming future thought in Scotland where evidence based policy is the norm, because there is *no* evidence for a future that is yet to happen and therefore cannot be observed. This point was brought home to me repeatedly while in the field, mainly for two reasons: Firstly, by local government officials who were potentially interested in future thought, but whose enthusiasm was tempered by the need to justify spending public funds on a subject which is still considered ‘star trecky’ in nature and particularly during a financial crisis. Secondly, by participants in the Glasgow process who were very keen to know about and learn from examples of futures exercises elsewhere, notably the NPC region, which has been practicing futures for more than forty years and which shares a very similar socio-economic profile to Glasgow. This curiosity to know what is happening elsewhere comes in the wake of the Glasgow City region futures process, discussed in greater detail in the last chapter. It represented the first tentative steps of regional stakeholders to engage with future questions, raising awareness among them of potentially how helpful futures thinking can be to the planning process *and* also the inherent challenges involved. It is my contention that

the strengths (and weaknesses) of the lessons that might be learned from the NPC region exercises, past and present, could contribute to the progression of future thought in Glasgow and potentially bring it out of the margins and into view. In particular, to the understanding of futures thought as a serious means of looking at cities, as is the case in France where it has long been integrated into central government and at local level, in the specific case of the NPC, where it is structurally embedded in the regional council.

While in the field I discovered that the NPC region already collaborates with British cities on urban questions and are open to the idea of establishing contact with other places, specifically with a view to ‘sharing’ experiences. However, learning from other places implies more than importing ideas of how to ‘do futures’ from elsewhere. In the last chapter I discussed the challenges of policy mobilities and while in the field, I was warned of the danger of simply ‘cutting and pasting’ successful policies that have been implemented in other places, including within the same country,

...someone who comes and tries to sell a model for which he claims to have a copyright, excuse me, is a charlatan. It is a problem of a logic of learning, collective intelligence and all that is very heavily determined by the context, the politics, the men and women who want to engage. When we have understood that, we do it tranquilly with our own culture, at our own rhythm and our stakes with our own capacities, which does not stop us from going to see what others are doing, because there are good ideas everywhere, but above all not try to apply a model. I said that we received a region, I will not tell you which one and they said, “we’re going to do it like you” and I said absolutely not, you will fail! You must choose an object, extract something solid and then construct, otherwise, you can try to construct something in four months that took us ten years, it will be like the soufflé that will work for a year, then collapse, because it will not have taken (interview, Lorens, Director of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 24th April 2008, my translation).

The lesson here is that each futures exercise is unique; it is place specific and must be made to measure. This applies not only between countries, but also within countries, as described above and as supported by the Voynet Law, which recognises the geographical and socio-economic diversity of regions within France and consequently the possibility of constructing a place specific vision which reflects this.

More recent events in Glasgow suggest that future thought is gradually moving out of the margins. According to DEMOS, their ephemeral dreaming city project involved over five thousand Glaswegians, or one percent of the local population⁶⁴. While it did

⁶⁴ Interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 11th August 2008.

not inform a wider planning document, it succeeded in raising awareness of alternative ways of thinking about the city, as discussed earlier, through their ‘open city manifesto’. The new emerging *Glasgow Urban Lab* which operates in partnership with Glasgow District Council and the Mackintosh school of architecture suggests the council is becoming more open to the utility of futures thought as a tool for decision making. The collaborative practices of the joint venture between the school of architecture and city council (and potentially other partners) within the lab will again be informed by a particular gaze and have a performative force of its own. Embedded in the school of architecture, it carries the danger of repeating the ‘blind spot’ error of the Glasgow city region vision, as one interviewee, who wished to remain anonymous, pointed out,

It’s dangerous because it is architects who tend to see the solution to be a building, so it’s quite physically determinist. There’s a shortage of houses in Glasgow, so what is the solution? We build some new modern up to date housing. That may not be the issue, there is a shortage of affordable housing; so what you need to do is change the prices, it is an economic solution (Interview, anonymous, 2nd September, 2008).

Drawing on the NPC region case study, is there something to be learned from the concept of ‘collective intelligence’, which although flawed in the SRADT example, aspired to capture a broad spectrum of opinion? This concept highlights the limitations of the constituency of the Glasgow City Region exercise discussed above and is pertinent when considering the inclusion of other future partners in the Urban Lab.

The NPC region futures process enjoys a strong input from academia and independent observatories, a pertinent example is the world renowned *Futuribles* based in Paris, which has one other office in France, located in Lille. The contribution of French academics and observatories to the futures process also presents an opportunity for learning. While the Scottish government has previously drawn on the expertise of the futures team at St. Andrews University Management Institute (SAMI), their contribution has been limited to two principal projects: ‘The Scenarios for Scotland, a Journey to 2015’, discussed in the previous chapter and ‘Capital Punishment’ (long-term decline) and ‘Capital Gains’ (long-term growth) scenario Planning Exercise, which described two potential futures for the Edinburgh City Region between 2004

and 2020⁶⁵. The actions performed by this management institute are inscribed in a business culture which leans more towards strategy than future thinking. In the Glasgow city region, prior to the existence of the Urban Lab, there were no observatories, as one interviewee lamented,

I would tend to say now, and I've said it for years, it is the kind of thing that you would want a *city regional observatory function* to get involved in. Arms length, interesting enough, not a lot of people in it, do a wee bit of forecasting and a wee bit of futures stuff local authorities would call upon them to say we are doing some work on the future of drainage in Glasgow in the next 40 years, what do you see the future as being like? You don't have a lot of futures people across the world in comparison to other analytical kind of support (Interview, Kevin Kane, Scottish Enterprise, 9th January 2008, my emphasis).

Furthermore, while in the field, many interviewees spoke of the marked resistance from Glasgow City Council to academic contributions to the field of planning, despite recognition from those within the planning profession that there is a real need for it,

it's actually finding the capacity to do a lot of this work, in terms of not just of numbers, but of people with the right sort of skills and knowledge and I'm sure there must be a better role for Universities in all this (Interview, Jim MacKinnon, Chief Planner, The Scottish Government, 16th May 2008).

In the last chapter, I mentioned the existence of the College of Prospective in the NPC region, the futures working group that aspires to 'keep the conversation going'. Reiterating the advice of the Director of Prospective in the NPC Region, whether futures work is conducted by academics, observatories or working groups, the lesson here is that future thought must be practiced '*all the time, not time to time*' (interview, Pierre-Jean Lorens, Director of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais, 24th April 2008, my translation).

I have already discussed the repercussions of the overuse of best practice examples in planning policy, or 'Vancouverism', resulting in the repetition of the same urban stories, coupled with the above warning against 'cutting and pasting' successful models from within countries. Nevertheless, planning professionals are constantly challenged with engaging with their own place specific urban questions and how they might adapt any 'knowledge' acquired from the experiences of other places; or as Shusterman put it, the performative endeavour of 'learning how to learn' (1997, p. 167 cited in Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000, p.428). As described when in the field,

⁶⁵ Source: http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/239/support_for_businesses/economic_information_and_development/443/local_economy-reports_and_forecasts/5

Professionals in the UK are not good at learning. I did an exercise where I took developers and politicians to Copenhagen and Malmo for four days. Very intense, every minute was used in terms of giving learning opportunities. Came back and the time came to give feedback to the committee...did a presentation to introduce the thing. I took a definition of learning by an American Psychologist...next slide, now the senior officer is going to show you how we learn. The guy proceeded to show a series of holiday snaps, with a very paper thin explanation of it. Instead of saying, 'that image represents a process, when I compare it to the process that we have; if we are happy with that end objective, we need to fine tune or change what we are doing'. That would have been the first step in learning about what we are doing. We learn when there is a major disaster, for the wrong reasons, we fire fight. Learning should be a continual process (Interview, Mr. Riccardo Marini, Architect and Design Chief, Edinburgh District Council, 7th November, 2007).

Finally, it was Landry who said that only when 'reflexiveness and learning' are embedded into every crevice of a city's inner workings can it sustain its creative momentum (2000, p.259). When practiced in a 'perennial' manner, future thinking is concerned with maintaining this creative momentum. In sum, it is an essential part of the learning loop which informs the futures narrative.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.0 Introduction

This final chapter offers some conclusions and provides a synopsis of the thesis by returning to the themes first explored in the literature review, notably: performativity, ordinary cities and utopias. This study has considered the practice of future thinking through comparative urban research, I have drawn on Charles Tilly's strategies for comparative analysis, specifically the *individualizing* comparison, which I will now use to explain some of the distinctive features of the individual case studies. As discussed earlier in the thesis, the focus here is on specifically 'local' details, the case study sites of the NPC region and Glasgow city region. My conclusions do not extend to how futures thinking is practiced throughout the individual countries concerned.

6.1 A Synthesis of International Comparative Findings

What can be learned from this urban comparative of futures approaches? In chapter one, I argued that this thesis takes seriously futures thinking as a means for looking at cities. The experiences of the NPC Region and Glasgow City Region demonstrate that the authorities in these places do so also, although they practice futures in very different ways. There are several distinctive features that characterise the NPC region and Glasgow City region, which emerged in the context of this comparative study. Firstly, the structural differences between the respective regional capitals: Lille in the NPC region, has a Mayoral system and therefore enjoys a level of local autonomy. In addition the Voynet law compels territories to engage in prospective thought, without being prescriptive. In Glasgow however, there is no such locus of power, or indeed a futures champion; which leaves the process of future thinking somewhat rudderless, as one interviewee observed,

Who is in charge of Glasgow would be a good question for a start? In a way the strange part, that it points in one direction and yet in public face terms leaderless. No public faces and accountable faces.....We did a post event discussion with the leaders and I said where are the public faces of Glasgow?.....There is an absence of public leadership , so there are these celebrities who walk on (interview, Gerry Hassan, DEMOS, 11th August 2008).

As I have discussed in Chapter four, the structural differences can lead to the provision of the necessary finances and political support to engage in a futures

exercise on the one hand, while on the other, it might also result in a *contre pouvoir*. This is a phenomenon that politicians are aware of and perhaps even afraid of, in which case the authorities can interrupt or abandon a project which runs contrary to their vision of a territory, as was the case in the NPC region. The structural differences combined with a successful historical precedent, the OREAM, have enabled prospective thought to become embedded in the regional council, where it is considered central to decision making in the NPC region. In the Glasgow City region future thought is leaderless, with no historical precedent, it is currently peripheral to decision making. Here futures exercises are intermittent and contingent and at present, the futures group is in abeyance. The structural implications of futures approaches, in Glasgow require further exploration to understand the impact of a shift in thinking from quantitative to qualitative measures on governance and working mechanisms and processes. The challenge remains a transformation in approach from fire fighting to creative thinking which requires a different mindset.

In addition to the cultural, historical and structural differences, perhaps the most obvious difference is that of the actors involved in the respective processes, provoking very different results. Firstly, the NPC region permitted the involvement of citizens in the construction of their territory and draws on actors from three main spheres: Political, economic and civil society. While ultimately it involved largely institutional actors, it was successful in creating an 'epistemic community'; in contrast to the technocratic building works proposal of the OREAM, the SRADT was concerned with the 'social demand' (Lorens, 2004, p.206). It is a bottom up approach, part of the emergence of a 'new governance' (cf. Delmarre and Malhomme, 2002). However, it fell short of capturing the wide audience it aspired to, particularly of citizens; therefore it must be perceived more as an *Astroturf* solution as opposed to solidly grassroots. As discussed in chapter four, this new governance presupposes that no actor or institution alone can claim to have all the answers, hence *collective* intelligence. It is also part of an ongoing process of future thought in the *SRADT permanent*. In contrast, in the Glasgow City region, largely institutional actors were involved in the futuring process. While this exercise achieved some success in transcending the 'silo mentality' that exists within the public sector, by gathering together officials who would not otherwise have the occasion to meet, the resulting narrative is a predominately white, institutional male gaze into the future. It is

embedded in a business culture group think, which leans more towards strategy, an undercurrent that is spoiling the possibility of tapping into a new way of thinking. This blind spot is compounded by a culture of evidence based policy making and anti-intellectualism in Glasgow, which is not conducive to future thinking.

While in the field, I repeatedly heard that the journey of the futurist was of more importance than any document produced. Both case study examples use the language of networks, aspiring to create a regional network of actors and have succeeded in the construction of a 'common language' between them through the futures processes in the respective sites, which culminated with the production of a futures narrative. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of performativity, I have argued that regional discourse is enacted through performativity, and that the futures process can be instrumental in 'enacting' or performing possible futures, as demonstrated by the OREAM (1971). Today, the Voynet law compels authorities to include a prospective component in the SRADT, without being prescriptive. The emergence of networks and an 'epistemic community' within the NPC region points to behaviors commonly associated with ANT, which will have a performative force of their own, that can only be assessed by a future retrospective analysis of the actions of this 'epistemic community'. With no historical precedent it remains to be seen if the futures process in the Glasgow city region is able to enact its own future. At present, it is characterized by the dominant white male gaze of the business community, which also has a performative force of its own and may unintentionally exclude other voices within the city. The futures component of the Glasgow City Region project is driven and perhaps constrained by the growth objectives of central government, compounded by the 'step change' discourse, which aspires to move up the city league tables, it is the antithesis of the 'ordinary city' (cf. Robinson, 2002). *All* cities have to compete for investment; yet here, the desire to 'get ahead of the Jones's' is decidedly more pronounced. It raises questions about the very understanding of what *sustainable* economic growth actually is and particularly why this should be the central thrust of the narrative. It draws attention to the prevailing culture within government, which is risk averse, driven by the accounting profession and reiterating an earlier comment, 'is all about due diligence' (Professor Peter McKiernan, Dean of the School of Management at St Andrews University Business School, 7th November, 2007). Alternative imaginings of the future have been explored in Glasgow by the DEMOS project, which was

largely misunderstood by institutional actors and perhaps failed to make a greater impact, not only because its aims were modest, it did not inform a subsequent project; rather it served as a provocative work. More recent imaginings of Glasgow's future have been explored by the Urban Lab, a research unit, and collaborative venture between Glasgow city council and the MacKintosh school of architecture. The Urban lab aims to 'develop the relationship between research, practice and education in the field of urbanism with a focus on regeneration and placemaking'⁶⁶. The collaborative practices of the joint venture between the school of architecture and city council (and potentially other partners) within the lab will again be informed by a particular gaze and have a performative force of its own. It is embedded in the school of architecture and carries the danger of repeating the 'blind spot' error of the Glasgow city region vision. It is too early to make any assessment of the influence of the urban lab within the city, this will become apparent as time elapses and the vision produced and actions performed by the urban lab unfold. Of particular interest is how the activities of the urban lab may potentially be used to inform or resist the parallel city region vision, which adopts a very different approach and of which Glasgow city council is also a key stakeholder.

I have discussed the importance of prospective as a window into planning in the emerging metropolitan city region environment; which aspires to underline differentiation between places, particularly, the need to transcend discourses on league tables and competitiveness, which as Parrad observed, leads to eerily similar images, from one territory to another (2005, p.116). In the specific case of urban growth and competitiveness in Britain, I have provided evidence by Moore and Begg, that the long run stability of city rankings is maintained, with little change of position in the urban hierarchy of economic performance (Moore and Begg, 2004, p.107). Further investigation is required to establish if this variable applies elsewhere, and in the context of this thesis, particularly to French cities. This evidence upholds my argument for the construction of city region visions from the standpoint of 'ordinary cities' as proposed by Robinson, who called for urban scholarship to make more effective contributions to the creative imagining of city futures by breaking free of the 'categorizing imperative' (2002, p.549). 'Ordinary cities' are not the imaginings of

⁶⁶ <http://www.gsa.ac.uk/research/research-centres/glasgow-urban-lab/>

urban elites, concerned with neoliberal narratives of competitiveness or city ranking placements; rather they privilege the view from below, they are ordinary cities for ordinary people. In the case studies presented in this thesis, the view from below is constructed by a network of regional actors, whose futures narratives aspire to celebrate the uniqueness of these places. While futures narratives have the potential to contest and perhaps even liberate these places from the constraints of the ‘categorizing imperative’; this remains a challenge in the NPC region and more so in the Glasgow City region, where the use of step change vocabulary only serves to reinforce it.

If as Baeten claimed utopia is currently clothed in the form of the neoliberal utopian ‘globalisation’ project (2002, p.151), then breaking free of Robinson’s ‘categorizing imperative’ calls for a return to utopian thought. I have argued that future thinking inhabits the space between *eutopia* and *dystopia*; it supports alternative imaginings of cities. It provides a ‘point of intervention’, as envisaged by Levitas (1993, p.257), which enables utopian thought to re-enter debates on city futures. Through ‘collective intelligence’ it challenges the singular, static visions of the past which effectively ‘discredited’ (cf. Lefebvre) utopias, yet in common with them, it remains vulnerable to a degree of resistance to critique by the existing order, as demonstrated by the local government in the NPC region case study. Successful exploration of an unknown future is dependent not only on the capacity to critically examine the future possible(s), but importantly, an ability to translate them into actions. While this remains a fragile process, in the NPC region the OREAM du nord and SRADT exercises have demonstrated a clear capacity to do so, whereas the Scots’ futures efforts are presently intermittent, specific and contingent. In this thesis I have argued that a paradigm shift is required in the field of planning to facilitate a critical appraisal of the multitude of possible futures, but specifically to do so in the ‘heteretopias’ or counter sites as Foucault imagined. Perennial in nature, such spaces already exist in the NPC region, as part of the ongoing SRADT permanent and the College of Prospective. The capacity to create such spaces exists in Glasgow, as demonstrated by the DEMOS exercise, although this project was ephemeral and now with the Urban Lab. While the Glasgow City Region has succeeded in raising awareness of this approach and a desire to continue future thinking, the Glasgow futures group is currently in abeyance, there is a struggle for the agency to embed it. The challenge in

both case study locations remains the transition from the intellectual space of a futures exercise to the messy realities of planning and the policy making space. In essence it is the tension created by the gap between the performative force of the 'lived territory' as perceived by the inhabitants and that of the 'administrative territory' of politics and government (Soulet, cited in Goux-Baudiment, F, Soulet, G and de Courson, J, 2008, p.26).

Finally, in the last chapter I demonstrated that although the NPC region is further ahead in its trajectory of future thought, this case study is helpful to planners and policy makers in Scotland (and indeed elsewhere) as an example of a successful exercise that they can learn from in two ways: Firstly, while in the field I was told that futures thinking would only be taken seriously when retrospective analysis of a futures exercise can demonstrate that it works. This is a pertinent issue in the case of Scotland, where I have argued that the inherent incompatibility of an unknown future with an evidence based policy approach is a contributing factor to the reticence of Scottish institutions to integrate futures thinking. Beyond the quantitative aspect of futures analysis which includes demographic trends, futures analysis is largely qualitative. As such there is *no* evidence to justify the polity of a future that is yet to happen and therefore cannot be observed, which has highlighted a tension between how futurists and policy scientists think about the future in Scotland. The OREAM is an example of a successful futures exercise, although it is not in the UK, it clearly demonstrates that futures exercises can and do work and are taken very seriously by governments elsewhere. Secondly, while decision makers in Glasgow spoke of the challenges of justifying spending public funds on the exploration of the 'future possibles', the regional council of the NPC continues to invest substantial amounts of time and resources in future thought. In the NPC region, which shares a similar socio-economic profile to Glasgow, future thinking is a permanent and ongoing process, considered a useful tool by mayors to clarify what lies ahead and inform how to wisely spend a budget. In sum, it is central to decision making. It enables alternative imaginings of these 'ordinary places' and in so doing helps to put them back 'on the map'.

Appendices:

Interview Questions:

How are futures constructed by urban planning systems in France and Scotland?

- What is the role of futures studies in your organisations activities?
- How did it come to be?
- How did you do it (which techniques)?
- Who is involved?
- How do you select them?
- What is its destination?
- How are futures/foresight knowledges used by people?
- Is this knowledge embedded in a structure?
- What happens to a scenario?
- Who sees it?
- Is there a relationship between sustainable development and futures studies?

The Political Sphere Actors in the NPC

Source: Goux Baudiment, proGective

Category	Organisation	Post
European Level	DG concerned	Commissioner Director
National Level	Services of the State	Ministers and Representatives
Regional Level	Regional Council	Elected Representatives Directors
Departmental Level	General Council	Elected Representatives Directors
Supra communal Level	EPCI (Etablissement public de coopération intercommunale) Syndicat Mixte (SD)	Elected Representatives General Secretary
Communal Level	Communes Agglomerations	Elected Representatives Directors

Actors from the Economics Sphere in the NPC

Source: Goux Baudiment, proGective

Category	Organisation	Post
Businesses	Large Business	PDG(président-directeur général), share-holders, directors
	Small-medium business	PDG, directors
	Small-medium industry	PDG, directors
	Very small business	Entrepreneur
Advisory bodies	CRCI (Regional Chamber of commerce and industry, CRA (Cedants et repreneurs d'affaires – Cessation and resumption of business) Customer relationship management	Elected member,
	Chamber of Commerce and industry	Director
	Chamber of Professions	Head of department
	Chamber of agriculture	
Professional Bodies / Labour Unions	Employers Union	Elected member and
	Shopkeepers union	director
	Craft Guild (UIMM - l'Union des industries et métiers de la métallurgie, CIM - Constructions Industrielles Maritimes)	
Voluntary sector	Chamber of Economics for the Young	President
	The Club of Young Managers	Core staff

Actors from the Societal Sphere in the NPC

Source: Goux Baudiment, proGective

Category	Organisation	Post
fédérations syndicales nationaux	FO (Force Ouvrière – Workers Union),	General Secretary
	CGT (Confédération générale du travail – General Employment Confederation),	
	CFDT(Confédération française démocratique du travail- French Democratic Confederation of Employment)	
Religion	Catholic faith	The archbishop
	Protestant faith	The Moderator of the Presbytery
	Jewish faith	The Rabbi
	Muslim faith	The Mufti and the director of the Mosque
Non commercial sector	Health	The Hospital director
	Army	The local Commander
	Education	The rector and director of the establishment
	University	University Principal
Voluntary Sector	A vocation of general interest	The president and delegate (or SG)

Current Futures Group

The initial meeting of the GCVSDPA Futures Group took place on 22nd January 2009. The following organisations were involved (GCVSDPA, 2009, p.iv):

Visit Scotland

East Renfrewshire Council

Glasgow University

Scottish Natural Heritage

Renfrewshire Council

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

West Dunbartonshire Council

East Dunbartonshire Council

Transport Scotland

Glasgow Centre for Population and Health

North Lanarkshire Council

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Scottish Water

Inverclyde Council

Scottish Government (Planning)

Scottish Enterprise

Forestry Commission Scotland

Scottish Government (Housing and Regeneration)

Glasgow City Council

List of Interviewees:

Mr. Thierry Baert: Directeur d'études, Agence de Développement et Urbanisme de Lille Métropole.

Mme. Matilde Ballenghien and Mr. Quentin Duvillier: Responsable Europe/Culture/Grand Equipements - L'Agence de Développement et d'Urbanisme de Lille Métropole

Mr. Philippe Bouchez: Department of Sustainable Development, Prospective and Evaluation, the Regional Council of the Nord-Pas de Calais

Dr. Michèle Breuillard: Université de Lille 2, CNRS Equipe CERAPS (Centre d'étude Recherches Administratives Politiques et Sociales), co-responsible for the coordination of the Franco-British Planning study group

Dr. Grahame Buchan: Structure Plan Manager, Glasgow & Clyde Valley Structure Plan Joint Committee

Mr. John Bury: Head Planner, City of Glasgow Council

Dr. Carole Craig: Chief Executive - Centre for Confidence and Well-being, Glasgow

Mme. Esther Dassonville: Collège du Prospective, NPC region.

Dr. Bertrand Delbecq: Formerly of the University of Lille 1, the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences and Municipal councilor - Tourcoing until 2008

Mme. Sylvie Depraetere: Assistant of Mr. Jean-François Caron, Councilor of the Nord Pas-de-Calais region and Mayor of Loos en Gohelle

Dr. Iain Docherty: University of Glasgow, School of Management

Mr. Sandy Gillon: Responsible for Sustainability, Glasgow District Council

Dr. Fabienne Goux-Baudiment: Founder of proGective, a futures consultancy, which facilitated the NPC prospective exercise and Former President of the World Futures Society

Professor Vincent Goodstadt: Formerly Structure Plan Manager, Glasgow & Clyde Valley Structure Plan Joint Committee and Honorary Professor at the University of Manchester

Mr. Charles Gordon: Member of the Scottish Parliament and former leader of Glasgow District Council

Mr. Gerry Grams: Design Consultant City of Glasgow Council, and now Glasgow Urban Lab.

Mr. Gerry Hassan: DEMOS

Mr. Donald Jarvie: Head of Business, Finance and Events at the Scottish Parliament Futures Forum

Mr. Kevin Kane: Scottish Enterprise

Dr. Michael Keenan: Manchester Institute of Innovation Research (and Directorate for Science, Technology & Innovation, OECD)

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